

the temporary loss of the Volyn and Rivne regions of Western Ukraine could not have a serious impact on the course of the war. Alas, at

the military council in Ternopil, Zhukov and Kirponos did not dare either to organize a retreat in the zone of the 5th Army, or to launch a large-scale offensive by the forces of three mechanized corps in the Lublin direction. Commander of the 5th Army, Major General M.I.

Potapov was ordered to advance with the task of "destroying the enemy's Vladimir-Volyn grouping and restoring the situation on the border." Advance immediately, without waiting for the approach of front-line reserves (two rifle and two mechanized corps). And since Zhukov, even on June 24, continued to believe in the existence of large enemy motorized mechanized forces in the Kovel direction, he "in a firm and confident tone" (as Vladimirsky writes in his book) ordered Potapov to bend the right flank of the army and "reliably cover Kovel from an enemy strike from Brest directions". In parentheses, we note that by this moment Guderian's tank group had already reached from Brest to Slonim, and the direction of its advance (to Minsk - Bobruisk) did not raise any doubts. As a result, to carry out the order to attack Vladimir-Volynsky, the commander of the army, Potapov, was able to attract only those two divisions that were already approaching Lutsk: the 135th rifle and 19th tank divisions. Commander of the 6th Army, Lieutenant General I.N. Muzychenko was ordered to immediately attack the enemy tank group advancing on Radekhov-Berestechko with the forces of the 15th mechanized corps alone, without waiting for the

concentration of two other mechanized corps (4th and 8th) in the Brody area. The decision to relocate the 4th MK and the 8th MK 100-150 km east of the border, to the area of the city of Brody, clearly indicated that the plan for the offensive from the "Lviv ledge" to Lublin had already been given up. It was decided to abandon the deep offensive operation (the theoretical development of which is invariably cited as an example of the highest level of Soviet military science) in favor of hastily "patching holes" through hastily organized frontal tank attacks.

Perhaps the most delicate thing that can be said about such "operational art" is that the decision was not

the most optimal.

"The enemy, who started the war with an unexpected blow, dictated to us his will, broke our plans" [105].

So, after spending only a dozen words, N.K. Popel said almost everything: both about pre-war plans (in accordance with which his corps moved to the crossings across the border river in the very first hours of the war), and that the German attack was not supposed in these plans, and about commanding the front, which allowed the enemy from the very first days of the war "dictate their will to us." "Happiness is on the side of large battalions..." If the forces

of the parties in the southern theater of operations

were approximately equal, then the decision made on the night of June 23 to counterattack the enemy with scattered strikes from individual units and formations would lead to an immediate catastrophic defeat of the Southwestern Front. Similar to the one that actually happened with the troops of the Western Front in Belarus and the North-Western in Lithuania.

But it was not for nothing that the huge, richest country in the world starved for two decades, huddled in barracks and communal apartments, it was not for nothing that in peacetime the military factories of the USSR worked in three shifts, it was not for nothing that in the country of workers and peasants a nursing mother was returned from a two-month-old baby to the machine, not in vain the best heads of the multinational Soviet people pored day and night over the drawings of tanks and aircraft. The result of great labors was. "Weighty, rough, visible." Zhukov, Kirponos, Muzychenko and others were given such gigantic armed forces, such a quantity of the latest weapons, which, it would seem, could compensate for the illiteracy of the leadership by their sheer scale. In fact, "only" the 15th MK, which was ordered, without waiting for the approach

of two other mechanized corps, to attack the Radekhov enemy grouping, had 749 tanks in its arsenal - five times more than in the opposing 11th **Panzer** Division Wehrmacht. And among these 749 tanks, there were 136 with parameters that German tankers could only dream of.

Even in the Lutsk direction, where a counter attack on the 14th Wehrmacht Panzer Division, which was pretty battered by Moskalenko's artillerymen, was supposed to be inflicted by "only" two fresh Soviet divisions (19th Panzer and 135th Rifle), the balance of forces, it would seem, did not bode well. After all, but 163 light tanks (129 T-26 and 34 BT) in

the composition of the 19th TD were listed [8]. Yes, and in the 135th Infantry Division there are 54 anti-tank "forty-five". It would seem that...

June 23-25, 1941

The analysis of how the decisions adopted on June 23, 1941 at the military council in Ternopil were implemented, we will start with the main thing - from the most powerful on the Southwestern Front, the 4th mechanized corps of General Vlasov. This will not take us much time and paper - the 4th MK almost did not take part in the planned counterattack (about what is hidden behind the word "almost" - see below). The sources at the disposal of the

author do not give at least some intelligible explanation for such an incredible turn of events. The command of the Red Army placed the highest hopes on this corps. Army General G.K. Zhukov, who after Khalkhin Gol became the commander of the Kyiv OVO, instructed the formation of the 4th MK to his old colleague, the hero of the battles at Khalkhin Gol M.I. Potapov. Then, in August 1939, Colonel Potapov, commanding the southern tank group of Soviet troops, brilliantly carried out an operation to encircle and defeat the Japanese army.

At the new duty station, Zhukov does not deprive Potapov or the 4th MK of attention. In August-September 1940, on the basis of the 4th mechanized corps, a series of large-scale military exercises were held on the topics: "introducing the mechanized corps into a breakthrough", "actions of the mechanized corps in the depths of the enemy's operational defense", "march and oncoming battle". The final exercise on September 26-28 was personally attended by People's Commissar of Defense Tymoshenko and the then Chief of the General Staff Meretskov. The instructions worked out during the exercise were brought in writing to the command staff of all mechanized corps of the Red Army [8].

After M.I. Potapov took command of the 5th Army, the "rising star" of the Soviet generals, the commander of the 99th Infantry Division A.A. was appointed to the post of commander of the 4th MK. Vlasov. The 4th MK received 414 of the newest T-34 and KB tanks - exactly as many as were in all the other Yu-3 mechanized corps. f., combined.

Already on the night of June 22-23, 1941, Zhukov, who personally arrived at the Yu-3 command post. f., demanded from the commander of the 6th Army, Muzychenko, "to transfer the 4th mechanized corps to the right flank of the army as soon as possible" [110], i.e. in the area of the planned counterattack from Brod to Radekhov. The lieutenant general easily and simply blew a direct order from the general of the army, the representative of the Stavka and the chief of the General Staff. Muzychenko sent the main forces of the mechanized corps to the left flank of his army, to the Yavorov-Krakovets

region, that is, to where the German infantry tried to break through the defenses of the 6th Army. True, in the memoirs there are reports that two tank and one motorized rifle battalions under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Lysenko fought on June 23, 1941, from 07:00 to 20:00, on the southwestern outskirts of Radekhov, together with the advanced units of the 15th MK. Even the numbers of enemy tanks and cannons destroyed in this battle are called. But the trouble is: in the report of the commander of the 10th Panzer Division of

the 15th Mechanized Corps on the battle near Radekhov on June 23, we read: "... the 4th Mechanized Corps, with which the division was supposed

to interact, did not go to the initial area for the attack." How to understand all this? Marshal Baghramyan, a war hero who commanded many fronts, by the time he wrote his memoirs, had become the honorary commander of the All-Union Pioneer Game Zarnitsa. Perhaps that is why some of the pages of his memoirs are written in the language in which the marshal spoke with the young Leninists. This is how he

describes Zhukov's reaction to Muzychenko's actions: "... the chief of the General Staff was gloomy. He silently nodded in response to my greeting Zhukov considered it a mistake that Kirponos allowed the commander of the 6th Army to pull the 4th MK from the right flank of the army, where the enemy delivers the main blow, to the left and bring him into battle on this in a secondary direction ... "In response to the obvious non-fulfillment of the order, he frowned. And it's all? No. The order was then repeated. "...General Kirponos formulated combat missions for the troops: the commander of the 6th Army, stubbornly holding the occupied front, should immediately withdraw the 4th mechanized corps from the battle and turn it t

In response to this repeated reminder, Muzychenko turned the 32nd TD, which had begun to move towards Radekhov, 180 degrees and sent it through Lvov to Yavorov, on the left flank of his army. On the afternoon of June 24, huge, many-kilometer columns of the 32nd Panzer Division, drawn into Lvov from the east, met in the narrow streets of the medieval city with the 8th MK, which, in accordance with the order of the commander, was moving from west to east, through Lvov to Brody. Only the lack of anti-tank grenade launchers in the attics of the Banderaites (the Faust cartridge will be created three years later) saved the Soviet tank crews from complete destruction. Only by the morning of June 25 did the 32nd Panzer Division break out of the traffic jams and join the main forces of the 4th MK in the Yavorov-Nemirov area.

Desperate to persuade Muzychenko, on the morning of June 24, 1941, Colonel-General Kirponos ordered the most prepared 8th Panzer Division of the 4th Mechanized Corps to be placed at the disposal of the commander of the 15th MK, General Karpezo (colloquially, this is called "not washing, so rolling"). Two days and one night later, late in the evening of June 25, "General Carpezo requested that the start of the offensive be postponed until the 8th Panzer Division approached ... The corps commander asked when the 8th Panzer Division would approach; he had high hopes for her. He had to be disappointed: the 8th Panzer Division, as General Muzychenko told us, had just begun to advance from the area west of Lvov. At best, she could come in a day ... "[110]

Bagramyan does not comment in any way either on the fact that the advancement of the 8th TD began with such a huge delay, or on the fact that the march of 110 km from Zholkev (Nesterov) to Brody of the tank division required "at

best, a day." In fact, as follows from the report on the hostilities of the 15th MK, "by the end of 26.6.41, the 8th Panzer Division concentrated in the Buek area" ('a town on the banks of the Western Bug, just halfway from Nesterov to Brody) [8].

Finally, on June 28, the 8th TD, together with the 15th MK, attacked the enemy in the area of the town of Lopatin (at the crossroads to Radekhov and Berestechko). As stated in the report on the hostilities of the 15th MK, "thanks to the active actions of the 8th tank division, the left flank of the corps was secured from the west and the 10th and 37th tank divisions were able to retreat to the line of the river. Radostavka ... ".

This is not a typo. The result of the "active actions" of the tank division in the offensive is that the other two tank divisions were able to safely retreat with its help, pursued by the enemy infantry. Although this achievement is by no means indisputable. So, in the report on the hostilities of the 10th TD we read something directly opposite:

"... the division's escape routes were cut off by enemy tanks and infantry, since the 8th tank division (neighbor on the left), which had the task of covering the division's actions from the west, could not advance through a heavily fortified anti-tank area ..."

The sixth day of the war - and the Germans in the depths of Soviet territory already have an anti-tank area ready, and even "heavily fortified" at the same

time? This battle limited the participation of the 4th MK in a tank battle in Western Ukraine. From

the few documents available, it is clear that the main body of 4-MK, after several half-hearted and fruitless attempts to drive the German infantry back to the border, began to withdraw to the east. So, the operational summary of the Yu-3 headquarters. f. dated June 27 reads verbatim:

"... The 4th mechanized corps, having made a night march from the Sudovaya Cherry area, from 6 o'clock began to concentrate in the forest area north of Obroshyn (withdrawal 40 km to the suburbs of Lvov. - M.S.) ... in front of the front of the corps 26.6. In 1941, enemy units numbering up to a battalion operated (an infantry battalion against a tank corps. - M.S). No enemy was found in the Mostisk area. The corps did not accept the battle ... "[8] In the future, the pace of withdrawal continuously increased: on June 29, the 4th MK left Lvov, on July 3, the corps was already in Zbarazh (135 km east of Lvov), the morning of July 9 found the 4th MK near the town of Ivanopol (180 km from Zbarazh). Finally, on July 12, the remnants of the 4th MK passed along the Kyiv bridges across the Dnieper and concentrated in the Priluki area (120 km east of the Dnieper, 650 km from the border).

The official version of Soviet historical science says: "The 4th MK successfully covered the withdrawal of the troops of the 6th Army." Much more successful - the mechanized corps, "covering the retreat of the infantry", overtook it by 200 km in space and two

months in time. For all this, Vlasov had nothing. That is, then, of course, they hanged him - but for something completely different. And in the summer of 1941, he even went on promotion and became commander of the 37th Army.

As for General Muzychenko, he was completely found not guilty. Direct sabotage of the orders of the higher command, the shameful defeat of two of the most powerful mechanized corps (4th and 15th), the complete collapse of management (even Bagramyan, who is very condescending to other people's mistakes, writes that "according to the combat reports that we received from him, it was clear that the command of the 6th army does not even approximately imagine the actual situation of its formations"), and finally, the encirclement and capture of the 6th army near Uman - all this was forgiven and forgotten. After returning from German captivity in May 1945, Muzychenko was reinstated in personnel, in rank, and

even ... awarded **three orders** (the Order of Lenin and the Order of the Red Banner in 1946, and another Order of the Red Banner in 1957)! When you compare this with the tragic fate of the command of the Western Front, who was shot without exception (the commander of the 14th mechanized corps, S.I.

Oborin, who was wounded in battle, was taken straight from the hospital for reprisal), then you have to admit that Comrade Stalin was a truly great man. Not everyone can understand the logic of his executions and favors... **The 16th mechanized corps** could not take any part in the tank battle in the "triangle" Radekhov - Brody - Dubno . For the first four days of the war, this mechanized corps (like the entire 12th Army as a whole) was practically inactive on

the Hungarian border. Then the 16th MK was transferred to the troops of the inactive Southern Front. The fact is that the commander of the Southern Front Tyulenev "discovered" in Romania as many as 6 non-existent tank and motorized enemy divisions and urgently requested reinforcements. Tyulenev was a big man: an army general by rank (there were only five people in this rank in the entire Red Army) and a former commander of the capital's military district. They believed him and sent the 16th MK from the passive to an even more passive sector of the war front. Then, when the catastrophe in Belorussia became a fait accompli, on July 4, 1941, the Headquarters ordered the urgent transfer of the 16th MK by rail to the Western Front, in the Mozyr area.

But the 16th mechanized corps was not destined to leave the southern theater of operations. Already during the redeployment begun, on July 8, the mechanized corps was unloaded from the echelons and thrown into battle in the Berdichev area, where German tanks

broke through the line of fortified areas on the old border. For several days, until July 15, a fierce battle flared in the Berdichev-Kazatin region, during which units of the 16th MK suffered heavy losses and the corps actually ceased to exist as a tank unit. The remnants of the 16th MK and its courageous commander, divisional commander A.D. Sokolov, died in the "Uman cauldron" ... The

combat operations of **the 22nd mechanized corps** in the Vladimir-Volyn direction ended in complete defeat. Apparently, the death in the first days of the war of the corps commander, Major General SM, played a fatal role. Kondrusev (from the memoirs of Marshal Moskalenko it follows that this tragic event took place on the first day of the war and almost before his eyes, and General Vladimirsky writes in his monograph that Kondrusev died on the evening of June

24 and under completely different circumstances). Further events are difficult to logically describe. After the death of Kondrusev, Major General Tamruchi took command of the 22nd mechanized corps. However, the "Description of the combat operations of the 41st Panzer Division of the Southwestern Front for the period from June 22 to June 29, 1941", which we repeatedly mentioned, [TsAMO USSR, f. 229, op. 157, d. 712, l. 443-444] was signed by the acting commander of the 22nd MK, regimental **commissar** Lipodayev, and the acting chief of staff

(which headquarters is not specified), senior **lieutenant** Koretsky. What does all of this mean? Why are the duties of a corps commander performed by a regimental commissar? And how is it that a senior LIEUTENANT ended up in the position of acting chief of staff of either a tank division or an entire mechanized

corps? Where were the majors, lieutenant colonels and real colonels these days? It's all form. Let's not find fault with the form in vain, let's move on to the content. As noted above, the main strike force of the corps, the 41st Panzer Division, left the main operational direction, from the Vladimir-Volynsky-Lutsk-Rovno highway, to the wooded and swampy region of Kovel. After the death of Kondrusev, the division actually came under the command of the commander of the 15th Rifle Corps, Zhukov's nominee Colonel I.I. Fedyuninsky. In his book Den-M, V. Suvorov writes with admiration about this colonel, who in the

humble beginning! On October 8, 1941, Major General Fedyuninsky takes over from the hands of General of the Army Zhukov command of an entire front, and what a front - Leningrad! True, after 18 days this brilliant career growth rolled downhill, and at the final stage of the Great Patriotic War, General Fedyuninsky went into the shadows. And in June 1941, Colonel Fedyuninsky disposed of a powerful tank group that had

fallen into his hands in exactly the same way as the commander of the 23rd Army, P.S. Pshennikov ordered the 10th mechanized corps on the Karelian Isthmus (does the reader still remember part 1?). The division was immediately broken up into separate regiments, battalions, tank companies, which were instructed either to scour the swampy forest in search of non-existent German "landing forces", then to guard the headquarters, or to cover the withdrawal of the 15th SC from Kovel to the wilds of Polesye. On the very first page of the "Description of the fighting of the 41st tank

divisions" we read:

"...23.00 23.6.41 a company of tanks from the battalion of Captain Kulakov was assigned to fight 8 aircraft that landed in the Novoselka area. (Is that like? Tanks to fight aircraft? - M.S.) Having traveled all night, Captain Kulakov neither landing nor aircraft found...

At 17.00 24.6.41, by order of the commander of the 15th Rifle Corps, together with the 45th Rifle Division, a company of tanks attacked in the direction of Lyuboml and lost 3 tanks. The attack took place without support infantry..."

Do you understand something here? The company attacked together with the division (a pug with an elephant), but at the same time there was no elephant? And here is a description of the same episode from Vladimirsky's monograph: "... at 14.30 on June 24, the 15th rifle corps, by the forces of the corps reserve, the 104th rifle regiment, entered into battle, together with the 61st rifle regiment of the 45th rifle division, with the support of armored trains and companies of tanks of the 41st Panzer Division with a counterattack threw the enemy back from Lyuboml. So what really happened: a successful, powerful, organized attack by infantry and tanks, or ... Further in the text there is no mention of BATTLE losses of tanks, but suddenly the phrase appears: "After all these operations, out of 116 tanks, 9 units remained" . What does "out of 116 tanks" mean? By the beginning of hostilities in the 41st tank

the division had not 116, but 415 tanks (according to Vladimirsky, even more - 425). Where did all this armored armada go? Let's go back to the "Description of hostilities ...": "... during the period of withdrawal of units of the 15th sk, by order of the head of the garrison (what garrison? what is he" head "for the tank division? - M.S.) blown up." Do you think it's easy to blow up a 52-ton steel turtle? It would be much easier to drain the diesel fuel from them, bury them in the ground and use them as a ready-made, powerful, invulnerable bunker for enemy field artillery.

Wandering through the forests and swamps, the remnants of the 41st Panzer Division, melting like fog at dawn, joined the main forces of the 5th Army only towards the end of June. And it just so happened that it was the 41st TD that put the last point in the history of the tank battle in Western Ukraine. But more on that later.

Two other divisions of the 22nd mechanized corps (19th TD and 215th MD) were stationed before the war in the city of Rovno. Having made a night march, they left by the morning of June 23 in the Lutsk-Kivertsy region. In accordance with the decision of the Yu-3 command. f. The 22nd MK, together with the 135th Infantry Division and with the support of the 1st PTAB, was supposed to counterattack the enemy near the city of Vladimir-Volynsky at dawn on June 24th.

The further course of events is not entirely clear. From the memoirs of Moskalenko, it follows that on June 23 and 24, the 1st PTAB fought fierce battles with German tanks advancing along the highway to Lutsk WITHOUT any interaction with parts of the 22nd MK. By the morning of June 24, the brigade held the line near the town of Torchin (25 km west of Lutsk).

On the other hand, it follows from Vladimirsky's monograph that "by the morning of June 24, the 19th Panzer Division had not yet arrived at its starting line, and therefore the counterattack, scheduled for 4 hours on June 24, was postponed to a later date ... Approaching at 13 hours on June 24 in the forest north of Shelvuv, the 19th TD had only 45 serviceable T-26 tanks and 12 armored vehicles ... at 14 pm on June 24, in cooperation with the 135th Infantry Division, the 19th TD attacked the enemy in the direction of Pasek , Voinitsa (and this is 25 km east of the line of defense of the 1st PTAB near Torchin. - M.S.) ... At 17 hours on June 24, the enemy, having brought tanks into battle, again attacked the 135 tank division ... As a result of a two-hour battle, the 19th tank division, having lost most of its tanks, and the 135th rifle division and the 1st artillery

the anti-tank brigade - a significant number of personnel and artillery materiel - began to withdraw to a line 12-16 km west of Lutsk ... "[92] It is difficult to

combine these two descriptions of the battles on the Vladimir-Volynsky-Lutsk highway. The author is more inclined to believe Moskalenko, who was both a living witness and the protagonist of these events. Most likely, the 1st PTAB and the 19th TD acted separately, and in the Voinitsa area on the afternoon of June 24, the strike group from the 19th TD and 135th SD could only meet with part of the forces of the German 14th Panzer Division, since the main forces of the 14th TD at that time were trying to break through the defenses of the Moskalenko brigade in the suburbs of Lutsk, i.e. were significantly west of Voinitsa.

The only thing that is not in doubt is the tragic result of the oncoming tank battle near Voinitsa. Let us give the floor to Marshal Rokossovsky: "...by the evening of June

25, the commander of the 19th Panzer Division arrived on foot at the command post of our corps in the Klevan area (90 km east of Voinitsa. - M.S.) ... Major General Semenchenko in a very upset state, with a bandaged right hand. He reported that his division was completely defeated ... Soon one of the commissars of the regiment of the same corps turned up here, reporting the death of General Kondrusev and that the corps was broken. The decadent tone and confusion of the divisional commander and regimental commissar forced me to advise them quite impressively to immediately stop ranting about the death of the corps ... "[111]

Unfortunately, these "rants" were not unfounded. This is how Moskalenko describes the meeting with the remnants of the 22nd MK that took place on the afternoon of June 25:

"... rear units and horse-drawn artillery from the units of the 27th rifle and 22nd mechanized corps unexpectedly rushed onto the bridge. Succumbing to panic, several hundred people, interfering with each other, tried to break through to the eastern shore. Their horses broke their legs between the sleepers, carts and guns huddled together. A bottleneck has formed. And then the Germans opened artillery fire on the bridge. An unimaginable turmoil began ... "[75]

The state of affairs in the 19th TD is convincingly evidenced by the fact that the march from Lutsk to Voinitsa (50 km) of this tank division

it took **a day and a half**, and **out of 163 tanks, only 45 reached the battlefield**. In the battle near Voinitsa, the commanders of all three regiments of the division were killed. Most likely, such losses were the result of a courageous but disorganized attempt to attack German tanks in the forehead (among which there were a number of PZ-IIIa with 50-mm guns) on light T-26s with bulletproof armor.

Even more "mysterious" events took place in the 215th Motorized Division. The name "motorized" should not mislead us. This German motorized division was an ordinary infantry division planted on captured French, Belgian, Czech trucks - and not a single tank. And before the war, the 133rd Tank Regiment of the 215th MD was armed with 129 BT tanks (that is, a little less than in the "14th Wehrmacht Panzer Division, where there were only 147 tanks"). Although on the morning of June 23, the division received an order about the

attack on Vladimir-Volynsky together with the 19th TD, she, continuing to operate according to the "red package", went to Kovel. Vladimir Volynsky met with the 298th infantry division of the Wehrmacht advancing from the city to the east. Before the attack on Vladimir-Volynsky, the 215th motorized division was transferred (in addition to its own) and one of the tank

regiments of the 41st TD. writes Vladimirsky, in the battle on June 25, the 215th MD acted as an infantry formation, "without a tank regiment" (???). "- and this despite the fact that the total length of the route Rivne - Lutsk - Kovel - Vladimir-Volynsky is 190 km along the highway, and fuel was stored in the warehouses of the 5th army in the amount of 33 (thirty-three) refueling! [92] The oncoming battle with the German infantry division ended with the fact that (according to Vladimirsky) the very next day, June 26, "the 215th motorized division concentrated in the Sofiyanovka area, 50 km east of Kovel." In other

words, the division was defeated and pushed back 80 km northeast of the battlefield (as always, there was enough fuel for this march). 129 BT tanks from the 133rd TP simply disappeared without any mention in the sources known to the author. True, at the end of June, the 215th MD was still listed (according to

according to Vladimirsky) 15 tanks, but these were T-26s, probably "nailed" to the division from other units. Here, in fact, is

the entire short course on the history of the 22nd mechanized corps. The death of the commander, the collapse of management and the collapse of the "armored fist" into separate pellets, the death of the few tankers remaining in the ranks in the battle near Bojnica, where only 45 combat vehicles went into the first and last attack on the enemy instead of 712 tanks of the corps. Combat

strike battalion... Events equally incomprehensible to the mind took place in the Radekhovsky direction, where the **15th mechanized corps** was supposed to counterattack the 11th Wehrmacht tank division advancing deep into the defense of the Soviet

troops. The 15th MK included three divisions: the 10th and 37th tank divisions, and the 212th motorized division. Before the war, they were deployed respectively in the areas of Zolochiv, Kremenets, Brody.

As we noted above, "the 212th motorized division, having almost complete security with the personnel of the Red Army, did not have any vehicles for transporting personnel." The vehicles assigned to the division from the national economy never arrived, as a result, the 212th MD turned into simple infantry, which, due to the lack of horse composition, became especially inactive. This circumstance, as well as the desire to ensure the defense of the rear of the corps from the mythical "airborne landings" of the Germans, led to the fact that the 212th MD "defended" Brody until the end of June 1941 and did not take any part in the counterattack.

How did the two tank divisions of the corps operate? Each Soviet tank division had two tank, one motorized rifle and one howitzer-artillery regiment. The 37th TD was no exception to this rule, but its 37th motorized rifle regiment was also left without vehicles and "could not act together with the division at the beginning of hostilities." Thus, having not yet fired a single shot, the 15th MK

was already left almost without infantry (only the motorized rifle regiment of the 10th TD took part in the hostilities on June 23-26) and without most of the standard artillery. In addition to the common misfortune for the entire artillery of the Red Army with a shortage of tractor tractors and trucks, the report of the commanders of the 15th MK and the 10th Panzer Division states the following

facts that can hardly be called any other word than the word "wrecking": "... in the first 3 days of

fighting in the 19th and 20th tank regiments of the 10th TD there were only 96 armor-piercing shells per regiment (regular the ammunition load ranged from 114 to 188 shells **per tank**. - M.S.) and not a single armor-piercing shell for 76-mm guns (i.e. the main striking force of the division - T-34 and KB tanks - was simply not capable of conducting combat with any enemy tanks! - M.S.) ... In the artillery regiment of the 37th TD there were 12 122-mm howitzers without panoramas (i.e. you can shoot from them, but never hit the target. - M. S.) ... Regimental artillery was sent to the regiments almost all out of order (how is it?!? - M.S.) ... Anti-aircraft artillery had an extremely limited number of shells ... Over the entire period of operations, the 10th TD could not nowhere to get a single shell for 37-mm anti-aircraft guns "(the best mobile anti-aircraft installations in the world, which, according to all pre-war plans, were supposed to reliably cover the victorious march of Soviet tank columns, turned into an extra burden, which was thrown on the roads of retreat). Against the background of such facts, the message that "there was no support for the division from our aviation during the entire period of hostilities is already

somehow casually perceived. Even intelligence data from aviation never came to the division ... ". And this is despite the multiple numerical superiority of the Air Force of the Southwestern Front over enemy aircraft! After reading this, I would like to agree with the opinion of communist historians that the Red Army was not ready for war. True, they always explained this by the fact that "history has given us little time." The author, however,

believes that history gave them (the communists) too much time. So many that it was enough to find and destroy almost all competent military specialists, and entrust the command of the front and rear to mediocre and illiterate upstarts who, being a hundred kilometers from the border, did not even bother to provide tankers with armor-piercing shells ...

The fighting of the 15th MK began at 9:50 on June 22, when the advance detachment of the 10th TD, consisting of the 3rd battalion of the 20th tank regiment and the 2nd battalion of the 10th motorized rifle regiment, advanced to the border along the Sokolowka route - Toporuv - Radekhov. In the evening, at 22

hours, he met with the enemy "with a force of up to two infantry battalions with anti-tank guns" (probably, these were the advanced units of the 57th Wehrmacht Infantry Division, which broke through the defenses of the Soviet troops in the Sokal-Chervonograd region).

"As a result of the battle, 6 enemy anti-tank guns and up to an infantry platoon were destroyed. Our losses are 2 tanks. By the end of June 22, Radekhov occupied the advance detachment ... "This was the first and, alas, the last success of the 10th Panzer Division, and indeed the entire 15th Mechanized Corps. Further events unfolded as follows.

At 6 pm on June 22, the main forces of the 15th MK began to advance in the direction of Radekhov - Lopatin. The task was set by him very resolutely: "to destroy the Sokal enemy group, preventing it from retreating to the western bank of the Bug River" (that is, at that time the Soviet command was concerned about how to prevent the aggressor from escaping back to the **adjacent** territory).

This order was carried out as follows: "- The 19th tank regiment of the 10th TD, which was marching off-road and through wetlands, got stuck in a swamp in the area of Kopta, Olesko (about 15 km from the start of the march) and to the indicated line by the deadline did not come out ... ";

- The 20th tank and 10th motorized rifle regiments of the 10th TD only reached Radekhov by 15:00 on June 23, 1941 (55 km in a straight line from the area of \u200b\u200bthe pre-war deployment of the 10th TD in the city of Zolochiv). The artillery regiment of the division "by that time was still on its way...";

- "The 37th TD, which had the task of concentrating in the Oplutsko area by 18 o'clock in readiness for a strike in the direction of Lopatin (the total length of the route is 65 km in a straight line from the city of Kremenets. - M.S.) at 14.00 on June 23, 41. received from the arrived commander of the 15th mechanized corps, Major General Karpezo, the task of destroying enemy tanks in the Adamy area ... Subsequently, it turned out that there were no enemy tanks in the Adamy area ... Turning the division to Adamy and not finding enemy tanks there, the commander of 37- After that, the TD continued to carry out the task of concentrating the division in the Oplutsko area, but with a delay of 5-6 hours ... "

While units of the 10th and 37th Panzer Divisions wandered through forests and swamps, the 11th Panzer Division of the Wehrmacht met at 05:15 on June 23 on the outskirts of Radekhov with the same forward detachment of the 10th Panzer Division, which occupied Radekhov on the evening of June 22 . Started up

a fierce unequal battle, in which the German division was opposed not by the 15th mechanized corps, and not by one of its divisions, but by only two battalions. "The advance detachment held the line it occupied until 13:30 and, having used up ammunition, retreated to the Maidan Stary line. Results of the battle: 20 enemy tanks, 16 anti-tank guns and up to an infantry platoon were destroyed. Lost: BT tanks - 20 pieces, T-34 - 6 pieces, 7 people were killed, 11 people were injured ... "

Finally, at three in the afternoon, two regiments of the 10th Panzer Division approached the battlefield. "The attack of the motorized rifle and 20th tank regiments of the 10th tank division without artillery support, in the presence of clearly superior enemy forces located at an advantageous line, was unsuccessful, and Radekhov remained behind the enemy. 5 enemy tanks and 12 anti-tank guns were

knocked out ... "This strange battle on June 23, during which Soviet tankers were forced to scratch the armor of enemy tanks with fragmentation shells, turned out to be the only major tank battle in the Radekhovsky direction. After that, each side went about its own business. The Germans, feeling

increasing pressure on the southern flank of the 1st TGr, left Radekhov for Berestechko (where on the evening of June 23 they captured the most important crossings across the Styr River), and from Berestechko along the highway to Dubno. Encountering no serious resistance, the 11th Panzer Division captured the bridges on the Ikva River and, on the evening of June 25, occupied Dubno, a major highway junction linking Lutsk, Rovno, Lvov, and Ternopil.

Following this, on June 24, another tank division of the 1st TGr (16th TD) was introduced into the breakthrough, which, by the end of the day on June 25, advanced units entered the Dubno-Ternopil highway near the city of Kremenets (130 km to the east from the state border).

In the Radekhov-Lopatin-Berestechko zone, the tank divisions were replaced by the German infantry (57th Infantry Division and 75th Infantry Division), which, taking advantage of the slowness of the command of the 15th MK, hastily created a defensive line along the banks of small forest streams: Radostavka, Slonovka, Sytenka,

Plyashivka. Meanwhile, parts of the 15th mechanized corps (like a boxer in the ring dancing before striking) made some kind of chaotic movement inside the "triangle" Radekhov - Brody - Buek.

If the comparison with boxing seems to the reader frivolous and indecent in a story about the tragic events of the war, then we can liken the actions of the command of the 15th MK to the behavior of a hunted wolf, which rushes about, but cannot decide to go beyond the flags set by the hunters. For

the most meticulous readers, who are ready to blind their eyes for hours over the map, we will also give an abbreviated documentary description of this

“Brownian movement”: “... the commander of the 15th mechanized corps, by private combat order No. strike in the direction of Sokolowka - Brody, destroy the enemy motorized units that broke through to Brody. The 10th Panzer Division, after being replaced by units of the 37th Panzer Division, was ordered to move to the Smolno-Ponikowice area and be ready to strike in the direction of Radziwillow. While on the move at 5 p.m. in the Buek area, the division commander received an order from the commander of the 15th mechanized corps: the division should return to its former concentration area - the forest south of Kholoyuv. Turning back, by dawn on 25.0.41, the division returned to the Kholojow area and took up defenses at the turn south of Kholojow. The 37th Panzer Division was tasked to cover the withdrawal of the 10th Panzer Division until 20.00 on 24.6.41, after which, having crossed the river. Sur in the area Monastyrek - Ruda Brodzka, go out into the forests west of Lyasov in readiness for a strike in the direction of Leshniv (that is, to the east. - M.S). By 2 o'clock the division reached the boundary of the southern bank of the river. Radostavka, where she received the task of going on the defensive along the southern bank of the river. Radostavka is ready from 13.00 on 25.6.41 to go on the offensive in the direction of Okhla-duv, Radzechow ... At 23 o'clock, following the order of the corps commander, the heads of the columns of the main forces reached the line of crossings over the ditch (as in the text. - M. C.) east of Turza. Here a private order was received from the corps commander: to remain in place and continue to hold the occupied

line, preparing a strike in the direction of Kholoyuv at 8 hours 30 minutes on 25.6. mobile group of the enemy and exit to the Sokal area (again to the west. - M.S). The commander of the 15th mechanized corps issued an order to the 10th

tank division to go to the Toporuv-Kholoyuv area and be ready to strike in the direction of Radzechow ... The 37th tank division was given the task of preparing crossings across the river. Radostavka and be ready for an attack in the directions of Ochladow - Radzechow ...

At 8.00 on 26.6.41, the chief of staff of the 15th mechanized corps arrived at the command post of the 37th TD, who, on the basis of the order of the front commander, set the task of retreating to the eastern bank of the Seret River east of Zalozhtsa-Nova ... Parts of the 37th etc. began to withdraw, organizing a strong cover from the rear. At 12.00 on 26.6.41, a new order from the commander of the 15th MK was received at the command post of the division - to immediately turn the division back ... and be ready for an offensive in the direction of Berestechko. On the basis of the order, the 37th TD made a 180 turn and again reached the line of the river.

Radostavka ... "Etc. Translated into simple Russian, this means that units of the 10th and 37th TDs, continuously replacing each other at different starting lines, driven by orders from the front headquarters, were preparing either for an attack on Berestechko, or for a second attack on Radekhov, or for repelling offensive of a non-existent enemy, "breaking through" to Brody, or even to retreat to Ternopil ... For the sake

of truth, it should be noted that periodically the middle-level commanders lost their patience, and they began to show the "private initiative" canceled in 1917:

"... at 10 o'clock on June 26, on the private initiative of the regiment commander, Lieutenant Colonel Proleev, the 19th TP attacked the enemy in the area of heights southeast of Radzechow. In the Denbina area, the Okhladovskie regiment was met by organized fire from anti-tank guns. As a result of the attack, up to 70 anti-tank guns, 18 tanks and up to an infantry battalion were destroyed. Regiment losses: 9 KB tanks and 5 BT-7 tanks...

... to counter the enemy's large reconnaissance detachments, the commander of the 20th tank regiment allocated a group of 15 tanks, and then a counterattack was carried out by the forces of the 20th tank and motorized rifle regiments, supported by two batteries of the 10th howitzer artillery regiment ... C With the exit of our tanks, the enemy tanks did not accept the battle and retreated beyond the line of heights, where the enemy had a strong anti-tank defense. As a result

battle ... counted 56 crushed and knocked out anti-tank guns and 5 knocked out enemy tanks.

Our losses: 4 KB tanks and 7 BT-7 tanks, did not return from battle 4 tank crew, including the head of the detachment, Major Govor ... "

All this confusion ended at six o'clock on the evening of June 26 with a scene quite worthy of a horror movie. Let

us turn again to Bagramyan's memoirs: "... enemy aircraft spotted the command post of the 15th mechanized corps. As a result of the fierce bombing, his headquarters suffered heavy

losses. The combat report of the 15th MK described this event more specifically: "18 enemy aircraft heavily bombed the command post ... The bombing continued for 50 minutes, as a result, 2 Red Army men were wounded and 1 was killed."

18 planes, 50 minutes of bombing, 3 casualties? During this raid, the commander of the corps, Major General Ignatiy Ivanovich Karpezo, was killed. Colleagues immediately, in the forest near the town of Toporuv, buried the general.

And then Ivan Vasilyevich Lutai arrived at the corps command post, deputy commander for political affairs, in other words, the corps commissar. He arrived, listened to the report on the death of the commander - and ordered

to dig a fresh grave. Front-line writer V.V. Karpov, a member of the Central Committee of the CPSU of the last batch, the first secretary of the board of the Union of Writers of the USSR, in his famous book of praising the wisdom of Marshal Victory Zhukov, gives the following explanation for the actions of the commissar: Ivan Vasilievich, they say, lost his temper from grief and began

to fight over the grave like a hysterical young lady ... It's hard to believe it. Our commissars had both a biography and an upbringing too severe to be presented in such an image. Something, apparently, alerted Lutai, and he, rather with a revolver in his hand than with tears on his face, decided to personally investigate the cause of the

death of the corps commander. The grave was dug up - Carpezo was alive, however,

unconscious, in a severe concussion. The vigilance and perseverance shown by Lutai saved the general's life, but no one managed to save the 15th MK from the defeat, to which he was already rolling irresistibly.

While the 15th mechanized corps rushed about in short dashes in the enchanted triangle Radekhov - Brody - Buek, and the 4th mechanized corps reciprocated along the route Lvov - Yavorov - Lvov, our third "hero" - the 8th MK General **Ryabyshev** - moved to the area of the future tank battle in a wide, sweeping zigzag, like a skier in a giant slalom.

On the eve of the war, the 8th MK was part of the 26th Army, which, according to pre-war plans, was to advance in the direction of Sambir - Rzeszow - Tarnow. Already at 10 am on June 22, an order was received from the army headquarters, according to which the corps was alerted and by the end of the day, having passed Sambir, went directly to the border river San. The first combat

clash of the head tank battalion of Major Sytnik with the German infantry also took place there. In Popel's memoirs, it is described as follows:

"... running gray-green figures disappeared under the tracks of the thirty-fours and KVs. The survivors threw themselves into the river and tried to escape by swimming. But tank machine guns completed the job ... "

The corps was not allowed to develop success. On the evening of June 22, at 22:40, a new order was received - by 12:00 on June 23, the 8th MK (already passed 80 km west from Drohobych to San) was to concentrate in the Kurovichi area (25 kilometers east of Lvov, retreat from the border to 120 km) and be placed at the disposal of the commander of the 6th Army Muzychenko. Tank columns moved back, describing a large hook with a length of more than 150 km along the route Sambir - Drohobych - Stryi - Lvov. The subsequent course of events is not entirely

clear. Bagramyan writes in his memoirs that after a meeting at the Yu-3 headquarters. f., on which it was decided to concentrate the 4th and 8th mechanized corps in the area of Brody, on the morning of June 23, "Zhukov, accompanied by representatives of the front headquarters, went to the 8th mechanized corps of Lieutenant General D. I. Ryabyshev to place to get acquainted with the state of his troops and speed up their advance from the Lvov region to Brody. However, neither Ryabyshev nor Popel mention in their memoirs a single word about the visit of the chief of the General Staff. But the main thing, of course, is not in the visits, but in the fact that the 8th MK was sent in a completely different direction.

In the middle of the day on June 23, when the main forces of the tank divisions were located approximately at the turn of the city of Nikolaev (38 km along the highway southwest of Lvov), and the 7th motorized division had already reached the outskirts of Lvov, Muzychenko ordered the 6th mechanized corps to turn west and by 19 o'clock on June 23, concentrate in the forest south of Yavorov (i.e., in the very area where Muzychenko, contrary to the orders of the front command, sent the main forces of the 4th MK). Huge multi-kilometer columns of tanks, trucks, armored vehicles for the second time in the last 24 hours turned almost 180 degrees and again moved towards the border. Having made a tedious night march,

the 8th mechanized corps, having traveled another 80-90 kilometers, went to Yavorov. There, late in the evening of June 23, the corps commander was handed a package with a new (and in fact, with the old, so to speak, "initial") order of the front command: again deploy the corps and by the end of the day on June 24 go to the Brody area.

This time, due to traffic jams and street fighting in Lvov, it was not possible to make another forced march within the specified time: by the evening of June 24, the main forces of the corps concentrated in Busk, and the 34th Panzer Division, which did not become drawn into the labyrinth of Lvov streets, went through Zholkev (Nesterov) to the Bug River near the town of Kamenka-Bugsky. By this time, Kamenka had already been captured by advanced German units, and they had to break through the city with a fight. It is also

not entirely clear when, after all, the 8th MK went to the starting area for the offensive. Ryabyshev writes that "in the afternoon of June 25, formations and parts of the corps concentrated in the area northwest of Brody." And from Bagramyan's memoirs we learn that at 4 o'clock in the morning **on June 26** "a report was received from General Ryabyshev. The corps commander reported that his 34th tank division was approaching Radzivilov, the 12th tank division was approaching Brody, and the 7th motorized division was still at Busk, on the banks of the Western Bug ...".

The only thing that is not in doubt is that during the relocation of the 8th MK from Drohobych to Brody (145 km in a straight line), the tracked vehicles had to cover about 450 km under their own power, hundreds of tons of fuel were turned into blue smoke, and the driver's train was exhausted to the limit by three sleepless night marches.

The advancement of the mechanized corps was somewhat more organized. the second echelon - **the 9th MK Rokossovsky and the 19th MK Feklenko.**

Rokossovsky in the very first hours of the war, with his power, seized the district motor depot in Shepetovka and put his 131st motorized division on trucks "expropriated" there. Thanks to this arbitrariness, the 131st MD, despite the disrupted, as elsewhere, mobilization of vehicles from the national economy, was able to reach Lutsk on June 23, overtaking both tank divisions of the 9th MK on the march. After that, the commander of the 5th Army, General Potapov, withdrew this division from the mechanized corps ("it was done over the head of the corps commander," Rokossovsky angrily notes in his memoirs) and put it on the defensive at the line of the Styr River.

This decision, although it weakened the already very modest capabilities of the understaffed 9th mechanized corps, was, of course, correct and timely. The 131st Motorized Division then saved the situation and prevented a breakthrough of the 5th Army front, which was clearly brewing on June 25 after the defeat of the 22nd Mechanized and 31st Rifle Corps. On June 24, the tank divisions of the 9th mechanized corps entered the concentration area and entered into battle with the advanced units of the 13th tank division of the Wehrmacht, which was trying to break through to the Lutsk-Rovno highway in the area of the village of Klevan (40 km east of Lutsk). As Rokossovsky writes, "At dawn on June 24, the 20th TD attacked the motorized units of the German 13th Panzer Division located at a halt in the Olyk area, inflicted heavy damage on them, captured prisoners and many trophies ... Having entrenched, the entire division day successfully repelled the attacks of approaching enemy tank units ... "The success is all the more impressive if we take into account that the 20th Panzer Division had only 36 (thirty-six) tanks before the start of hostilities, of which 30 were

discontinued yet in 1934 with light BT-5s. The commander of **the 19th MK**, Major General N.V. Feklenko was less fortunate: in Zhytomyr and Berdichev there was no ownerless motor depot, and the route of the upcoming advance of

the 19th MK was 100 km longer than that of the Rokossovsky corps. Nevertheless, by the morning of June 25, the 19th mechanized corps, having traveled more than 200 km on its extremely worn-out T-26 tanks of the combat training park, reached the initial deployment area. The high pace of the march was due to the competent and proactive actions of

command on the scale of all tank troops of the Red Army - to reduce the exorbitantly swollen number of mechanized formations and thereby bring the staffing of the remaining to regular standards. As Vladimirovsky writes,

"before going on a campaign, each tank division of the 19th mechanized corps was divided into two echelons - mobile and foot. The mobile echelons included all serviceable tanks, consolidated into tank regiments (one consolidated tank regiment per division), as well as the personnel of the motorized rifle regiment and special forces divisions, which could be transported by cash vehicles. The rest of the divisions, which were not provided with

vehicles, were included in the foot echelons, and the faulty tanks were left at a repair base in Novograd-Volynsky ... "(i.e. lagged behind the main forces of the corps by **150 km** and later fought as part of the 16th army of General Lukin near Shepetovka, and did not take part in the hostilities of the 19th MK). Thus, the 19th mechanized corps (like the Rokossovsky corps) was left without motorized infantry, which further reduced its modest combat capabilities. **The first of all mechanized corps Yu-3. f. The 19th MK** entered into a tank battle near Dubno. On the night of June 26, the forward detachments of the 40th and 43rd Panzer Divisions reached the outskirts of Dubno, where a meeting battle began with the motorized infantry and tanks of the 11th Wehrmacht Panzer Division, and then with the 13th Panzer Division

urgently deployed to this area. , 299th and 111th infantry divisions of the enemy.

Paying tribute to the initiative and determination of General Feklenko, let's take into account the fact that due to the collapse of the entire communications and command and control system on the Southwestern Front, the commander of the 19th MK was spared for four days from receiving any instructions from higher authorities. It is still unknown what the situation would have been if he (as, for example, the commander of the 8th MK Ryabyshev) received three different orders a day ...

tank case

From all of the above, it follows that out of 16 tank and 8 motorized divisions of the Southwestern Front, only two tank (10th and 19th) and two motorized (215th and 131st) divisions.

The fact that most of the mechanized forces of the front were not involved in the battle in the first days of the war would not be bad at all - if this pause were used for organized mobilization of units, for resupplying them with personnel and material

part.

If only ... Here we finally come to one of the main "secrets" of June 1941. It will, of course, not be about "why Stalin slept through the war", but about the fact that both tank and aviation, and all other units and formations of the Red Army were seized by the mysterious "unrecorded loss" of military equipment. Like a dream, like a morning

fog, the most powerful **4th MK**, which did not enter into battle with the main enemy forces, melted away . When by July 12, 1941, the remnants of the corps reached the eastern bank of the Dnieper, it turned out that out of 101 KB tanks, only 39 out of 313 "thirty-fours" remained in service, and out of 565 light tanks, 23 BT tanks came to Priluki. Of course, some of the light tanks could have been lost in

skirmishes on the streets of Lvov, and there were also losses during clashes with German infantry on June 23-26 in the Nemirov-Yavorov area. Available documents and materials suggest that several dozen tanks of the 4th mechanized corps participated in the combined group of Divisional Commander Sokolov in the battles near Berdichev (July 7-15). However, all these clarifications can in no way be considered an explanation for the mysterious disappearance of nine hundred tanks. Moreover, most of the losses occurred already in the first 5-10 days of the war. So, in the 63rd tank regiment of the 32nd TD, out of 150 tanks, by July 3, only 32 units were serviceable and fit for battle [8].

Presumably, one of the best in the district was the 8th Panzer Division of the 4th MK. This assumption can be substantiated at least by the way the 8th TD was armed: 50 KB, 140 T-34s, 68 three-tower T-28s, 31 BT-7s and 36 T-26s, a total of 325 tanks. In terms of the number of new tanks, the 8th TD alone surpassed the four mechanized corps of the Northern and Northwestern fronts.

And here is how N.K. Popel of the commander of the 8th Panzer Division: "... I look at him and admire - nature spared nothing for this man: neither beauty, nor intelligence, nor courage, nor charm ... Red Army soldiers tell legends about his exploits in Spain and Finland . Fotchenko already has four orders... The commanders catch his every word on the fly. The boss sets an example at meetings. And this is not cheap popularity, not the fruits of easy flirting. Fotchenko is devoted to military service ...

"Now we just have to open

the report of the 15th MK and read in what form this exemplary division arrived in the starting area to launch a counterattack on Berestechko: "... attached to reinforce

the 15th mechanized corps 8 The 1st Panzer Division had a consolidated tank regiment of 65 tanks..." 65 out of

325. And this despite the fact that, being part of the 4th MK, the division practically did not participate in serious battles. About where four out of every five tanks of the 8th TD disappeared, history is still silent ...

As we have already noted, the 41st TD 22 **MK did not participate in the battles of the first week of the war**, however, out of 415 tanks (31 KB and 384 T-26 of various modifications) by June 29, 106 T-26 and 16 tanks remained in service. KB [8, 92]. In seven days, 293 tanks went missing! We have already said above that out of 163 tanks of the 19th Panzer Division, only 45 tanks reached the battlefield near Voinitsa. The tank regiment of the 215th motorized division

of the same 22nd MK disappeared without a trace. The author does not yet have exact data on the size of non-combat losses in **the 8th MK** . Sources give very different estimates. So, in a well-known review of the actions of mechanized units of the fronts, compiled in the Main Armored Directorate of the Red Army after the disbandment of the mechanized corps [VIZH, 1988, No. 11], it was reported that the 8th mechanized corps "left on the roads during the marches up to 50% of the available materiel".

The commander of the 8th mechanized corps, Ryabyshev, writes in his memoirs that "during the march of almost 500 km, the corps ... lost up to half of the tanks of obsolete designs," which no longer coincides with the previous statement. Further, Ryabyshev gives data on losses and the number of tanks remaining in the ranks, the summation of which allows us to conclude that even after the fighting and losses of the first day of the offensive (June 26), the corps had six more

hundreds of tanks (including more than KB and T-34), which is not half, but two-thirds of its initial strength. Finally, from

the memoirs of N.K. Popel, it follows that on June 25, by the time they entered the Brody area, which was the starting point for the counterattack, there were

about seven hundred tanks in the corps. A concrete idea of how this "fall" of tanks took place is given by **a unique document** published on the Internet site of the Mechanized Corps of the Red Army. This is a complete list of all heavy five-turreted T-35 tanks from the 34th TD of the 8th MK, indicating the date, place and reason for the failure of the tank.

We remind the reader that these tanks (by the summer of 1941, of course, outdated) were a combination of very powerful weapons with weak bulletproof armor protection. Any German anti-tank gun was guaranteed to penetrate the side armor of this three-meter-high monster. It would seem that combat losses among tanks of this type should have been especially great. But in reality, **only 6 tanks out of 47** (13%) said the cause of the loss was "shot down in the battle on June 30" (this is the last battle of the 8th MK near Dubno, which we will talk about a little later). Where is everyone else?

One tank "disappeared", two got stuck in a swamp, two fell into the river from the bridge. The remaining 36 tanks (77%) were lost due to all kinds of technical malfunctions. For example, tank No. 715/62 was abandoned by the crew in Lvov due to a "fan drive failure", and this happened on June 29, i.e. five days after the 34th TD left the area and went to Brody. Tank No. 234/42 was left in the northern suburbs of Lviv, allegedly because of the "burnt main clutch", already on July 3, i.e. four days after the capture of Lvov by the Germans! In general, "history" and

"geography" in this report do not coincide in any way. At least 12 tanks have been named as the place where they were lost, the areas from which the division left a few days ago. The main technical malfunction that caused the loss of 22 tanks was the failure of the gearbox and transmission ("friction clutch burned out"), which can equally be associated with both wear and tear of equipment and illiterate (or deliberate) actions of the driver.

The last two tanks broke down on July 9 near Volochisk (50 km east of Ternopil), and the history of the "combat use" of the T-35 ended forever. The history of the defeat of **the 15th MK**

is best documented - we have at our disposal three reports on combat operations (both the corps as a whole and each of its tank divisions) [8]. From these documents we learn that the 10th

Panzer Division had 363 tanks as of June 22. Of these, 318 tanks turned out to be technically sound and went on a campaign, i.e. 88% of the total. In parentheses, we note that this is a very decent indicator for the technology of that time - for example, in the Wehrmacht, as of June 1, 1941, 92% of the available number of tanks were considered combat-ready [1, p. 484]. In the battle near Radekhov (June 23), as well as in other

military operations directly mentioned in the report on June 24-26, the 10th TD lost 53 tanks. A question for a first-grader - how many tanks should have remained in the division? In the report on the hostilities of the 15th MK,

signed by Colonel Ermolaev (who replaced the shell-shocked Karpezo as commander of the corps), we read: - 10, T-34 - 5, T-28 - 4, BT-7 - 20 units ... "Are 39 tanks left from the entire division ?!

I confess, having read this phrase for the first time, I was not even very surprised - a typo, who doesn't happen to ... But no, further in the report the total number of tanks in the entire corps is given. Everything fits, no typos: even before the start of the main events, the 10th TD turned into a pretty battered tank company. A very

detailed report of the 10th TD allows you to specify the composition this "unaccounted for loss":

- KB: 63 went on a campaign, 13 lost in battle, 10 left, "unrecorded" - 40; - T-34: 37 went

on a campaign, 6 lost in battle, 5 left, "unrecorded" - 26; - T-28: 44 went on a

campaign, 0 lost in battle, 4 left, "unrecorded" - 40; - BT-7: 147 went on a campaign, 32

lost in battle, 20 left, "unrecorded" - 95;

- T-26: went on a campaign 27, lost in battle 0, left - 0, "unrecorded" - 27. A small clarification - in the

battle on the evening of June 22, Radekhov had 2 more tanks were lost, the type of which is not indicated in the documents.

In total: in five days, no one knows where 228 tanks (including 40 KB and 26 T-34s) disappeared, which - this is very important - were considered quite serviceable before the start of hostilities!

Here the author considers it necessary to interrupt the consistent description of the "tank case" in the mechanized corps of the South-Western Front and explain to the reader.

The question of the extent of personal responsibility of each tank commander, commanders of regiments and divisions for the loss of each of the tanks abandoned on the roadside was to be decided by a military tribunal. The author of this book is not a military prosecutor, does not have the powers of a military prosecutor, and does not pretend to be a prosecutor. But not a single conscientious historian has the right to ignore, let alone hide from readers, a mass phenomenon that has taken place. If three-quarters (more precisely, 72%) of the tanks of the 10th Panzer Division, serviceable and combat-ready as of June 22, disappeared to no one knows where in five days, this only means that there was actually no Panzer Division. There was an uncontrollable crowd of armed people, which quickly turned into a crowd of unarmed people, and then into a column of prisoners of war, dejectedly wandering along a dusty road ... individual shortcomings. Not at all. The 10th TD was one of the best - at least it is the only tank division whose successful actions in a tank battle in Western Ukraine were noted by the authors of the classic 12-volume "History of the Second

World War": "... in the battles near Radekhov they distinguished themselves soldiers of the 10th TD ... Many soldiers, commanders and political workers of the division were awarded orders and medals ... "

At first, non-combat losses were much less in the 37th Panzer Division of the 15th MK, although it, like the 10th Panzer Division, rushed through the forest around and around Radekhov for three days. Of the 316 tanks that were in service with the 37th TD before the war, 285 vehicles (90%) went on the campaign.

Of these, by the end of the day on June 26, as many as 211 tanks remained in service (26 T-34, 177 BT-7, 8 T-26). Alas, looking ahead, let's say

that the 37th tank division quickly came "to a common denominator": by July 8, out of 211 **tanks**, 2 T-34 tanks and 12 **BT remained in service** - and this despite the fact that (as follows from report of the commander of the 37th TD) in a single battle on June 28, the division lost no more than 20 tanks. What was it? What I love about Soviet "historians" is their stamina and resourcefulness. We didn't even have time to ask a question, when they already had an answer

ready: "... Soviet tanks

were unreliable, primitive, worn out, with exhausted motor resources, in a word, steel coffins." Such an explanation will probably seem plausible to a modern "Russian", who is used to the fact that Russia buys sockets, cords, and light bulbs in highly developed Malaysia or Singapore. But we were not always such a backward village, not always ... In May 1933, as part of the long-term cooperation between the Red Army and the Reichswehr, a group

of German officers led by General Bockelberg visited a number of Soviet industrial enterprises. As is customary with us, every word that the Germans exchanged among themselves was recorded, and their written reports on the trip were intercepted. As a result, it became known what impression everything seen in Soviet Russia made on the Germans: "... aircraft plant No. 1 (former Dux) is a well-equipped plant ... the chemical

plant in Bobriky is an archaic modern enterprise, the aircraft engine plant in Aleksandrovsk is a modern plant, good leadership ... the general conclusion: the newly built industrial enterprises leave an exceptionally good impression ... the joint work of the Soviet military industry is highly desirable for military-technical reasons ... "During a visit to the Kharkov Tractor Plant, Bockelberg," stunned by the scale of production, the vast territory workshops and the latest American equipment," he said literally the following: "I would like to have such a magnet in order to transfer this plant to Germany in one fell swoop" [71, p. 318].

The tales about the extreme wear and tear of our military equipment on the threshold of war are not confirmed in original documents. On the contrary, the gigantic volumes of military production made it possible to update the tank fleet very quickly. We open the "Report on the

combat activities of the 10th Panzer Division on the front of the fight against German fascism" [8] and we read:

"... the KB and T-34 tanks, without exception, were all new vehicles and by the time of the hostilities they had worked up to 10 hours (they had mostly been run-in) ... The T-28

tanks had an average cruising range of up to 75 hours. BT-7

tanks had a cruising range of 40 to 100 engine hours ... T-26

tanks were mostly in good technical condition and worked for only 75 hours (from an estimated 150 hours of engine life to a scheduled average repair). In other words, even the most "worn out" of the tanks

available in the 10th TD had a remaining motor resource of 40 hours, which, with a very modest cruising speed of 20 km / h for a high-speed BT tank, gives a cruising range of 800 km. With such a motor resource, they could go from Brod to Lublin and back. Twice.

We open the last pre-war "Statement of the availability and technical condition of combat vehicles as of June 1, 1941" [104] and we read that out of 5465 tanks of the Kiev OVO, 1124 tanks were completely new, not in operation, another 3664 tanks (67%) were considered "quite serviceable and fit for use", and only 677 tanks (12%) needed in medium and major repairs.

Moreover, in the same report on the hostilities of the 10th TD it is literally said: "... the soldiers

and division commanders speak of our tanks as very reliable cars. Fighters and

commanders, of course, exaggerate. The manufacturing quality of Soviet tanks was still far from ideal. American engineers at the Aberdeen Proving Ground, who studied our T-34 and KB tanks at the end of 1942, noted their generally recognized advantages: "... the shape of the T-34 hull is better than on all known vehicles ... the F-34 gun is very good, simple, works flawlessly and is easy to maintain ... the sight is the best in the world, it cannot be compared with any of the existing or being developed in

America ... diesel is good, light ... both tanks overcome slopes better than any of the American tanks ... the compactness of radio stations and their good location in cars ... ”- but at the same time they were very skeptical about the quality of manufacture of these miracles

tanks:

“... the turret rotation motor sparks terribly, as a result, the resistance to adjusting the rotation speeds burns out, the gear teeth crumble ... The track pins are extremely poorly hardened and made of bad steel, as a result they wear out very quickly, and the caterpillar often breaks ... the air cleaner does not clean the air entering the motor at all, dust entering the cylinders leads to their very rapid operation ... chemical analysis of the gearbox gear teeth showed that their heat treatment is very poor and does not meet any American standards for such parts of mechanisms ... extremely careless machining and bad steels...” [87] Of course, the criticisms of American engineers would have looked much more convincing if American tanks

(more than four thousand Shermans-M4A2 alone were delivered to the USSR under Lend-Lease) were loved from Soviet tankers. It should also be borne in mind that the Americans examined the “thirty-four” of military production (which implies low-skilled workers and teenagers at machine tools, an acute shortage of alloyed steels, thousands of implemented “rationalization proposals” aimed at maximizing simplification and reduction in cost of construction). But the most important thing is not this. The main thing is that **neither before the summer of 1941, nor after it**, such a massive “death” of Soviet tanks was ever noted. The first episode of the combat use of

BT tanks was the war in Spain. So, in 1937, the Bateški, advancing to the Aragonese front, made a 500-kilometer march along the highway on wheels (the terrain and

dry weather allowed) without significant breakdowns. A year and a half later, in the summer of 1939, BT-7 tanks from the 6th Tank Brigade made an 800-kilometer march to Khalkhin Gol, this time on tracks, and also with almost no breakdowns.

In August 1945, BT tanks of the Trans-Baikal, 1st and 2nd Far Eastern fronts took part in the so-called

"Manchurian strategic operation". Then the tank brigades had to go 800 km through the Greater Khingan mountain range - and the old "bateshki" (the most recent of which were released five years ago) withstood such a test. But even if we assume that the tanks have simply stood for conservation for all five years, then in this case their technical condition could only worsen: the rubber hoses were brittle, the seals were "wrung out", the contacts were corroded ...

The history of the T-34 tank, as it is written about in all books, began with the fact that in March of the 40th year, the first two experimental tanks traveled 3,000 **km on their own** along the route Kharkov - Moscow - Minsk - Kiev - Kharkov. We passed in the spring thaw, along country roads (moving along the main highways and even using bridges in the daytime was forbidden for reasons of secrecy). Yes, such a march was not easy for the technique - the ferrodo on the main clutch discs burned out, chips were found on the gear teeth of the gearboxes, and the brakes burned out. In the end, the turnaround time for production tanks was not set at 3,000 km (as provided for in the terms of reference), but only at 1,000 km.

In the cold of January 1943, during the offensive Operation Don, Soviet tank brigades marched more than 300 km across the snowy Zadonsk steppe and defeated the large forces of the German Army Group A, which broke through in the summer of 1942 to the oil-bearing regions of Mozdok and Grozny. In May 1945, the tanks of the 3rd and 4th Guards Tank Armies traveled 400 km from Berlin to Prague. Through mountainous wooded areas, in five days, and at the same time - without

significant technical losses. The legendary "thirty-four" went through the entire war, in many armies of the world it stood in service until the mid-60s. And no one has ever complained that it falls apart after walking 60 km (the distance from Brod to Radekhiv). In the Finnish army, several captured Komsomolets artillery tractors served right up to 1961! Without spare parts, without instructions for use, among the Finnish snows and swamps. No less expressive are the statistics of losses of heavy artillery tractors with the wonderful name "Comintern". Before the war, industry produced and handed over 1712 vehicles to t

The panic "relocation" of the first months of the war led to the fact that by September 1, 1942, only 624 tractors remained in service. And then, during the three years of the war, only ... 56 units were lost [87].

According to the author, the key to unraveling the reasons for the mass failure of military equipment in June 1941 can be found, and all in the same report of the commander of the 10th TD of the

15th MK. We read: "... out of 800 wheeled vehicles deployed on the campaign, 210 vehicles were lost as a result of the battle, 34 vehicles were left with drivers surrounded by the enemy due to technical malfunctions and due to lack of fuel and lubricants, 2 vehicles were destroyed at the assembly point emergency vehicles ... 6 vehicles stuck on obstacles ... 41 vehicles were abandoned when the unit was withdrawn due to technical malfunctions ... "

"What does wheeled vehicles have to do with it?" - asks another impatient reader. Let's not rush. We will count, compare and think.

The total number of stuck and broken trucks did not exceed **10%** of the total. What are these ultra-reliable and highly passable cars? We answer - 503 "GAZ AA" and 297 "ZIS-5". Dear reader, do you know what it is - "one and a half" "GAZ-AA"? No,

you don't know that. The front axle is on one spring, and even that is across the frame, the rear axle hangs on two stumps - half-springs, a cardan shaft without a cardan shaft, a carburetor without an air filter (just a hole and that's it, like in a vacuum cleaner). At a breakneck speed of 40 km / h, only a deep track could keep this car in a straight line. After two or three "walkers" from the collective farm current to the city elevator, the driver of the "lorry" with a sense of accomplishment put it in for repair: pulling the crankshaft babbit bearings, washing the "vacuum cleaner" carburetor, and so on.

And such vehicles covered at least 500 km almost without breakdowns (the figure is already 3000 km in the report) from the border to the Dnieper - and the tanks on the same route all broke down and got stuck in the swamps? How can this be combined? Was the poor "lorry" really more reliable, maneuverable and protected from air attacks than armored tracked vehicles, some of which (BT-7, T-34) could be considered the best tanks in the world in terms of all indicators of mobility?

"Well, again, I dug up a figure, clung to it and inflated a separate special case into a whole theory." So, another reader will probably say. The criticism is justified. Let's take a look at the big picture. Why again turn to the most official source - the repeatedly cited monograph of the Russian General Staff "Secrecy removed."

The compilers of this work did a good job. Fourteen pages list the losses of weapons and military equipment by years of war. Tanks - separately, guns - separately, 122-mm howitzers separately from 152-mm howitzers, etc. Moreover, losses are expressed not only in absolute numbers, but also as a percentage of the "resource", i.e. the total amount of equipment available to the troops at the beginning of the period and received from industry (under Lend-Lease, from repairs).

So, in the second half of 1941, the percentage of losses is monstrously high. 73% tanks, 70% anti-tank guns, 60% howitzers, 65% light machine guns, 61% mortars... Although, it would seem, what can break in a mortar? A pipe is a pipe... Against this background, the numbers of car losses look like a "beam of light in a dark kingdom" - only 33.3% for six months in 1941. Miracles! Primitive "one and a half" and "ZIS" turned

out to be twice as reliable and durable than a mortar? Plywood cabins turned out to be stronger than tank armored hulls? And did you find gas? After all, a car is not a horse, and even more so not a Red Army

soldier, no matter how much you "press on consciousness", and without fuel it will not budge ...

The answer is obvious, although very indecent: for a demoralized, panic-stricken crowd, tanks and cannons, machine guns, mortars are a burden. Not only do tanks crawl slowly, they are forced to fight by the very fact of their presence. That's why they rushed to get rid of them. And the truck - even the weakest one - was saved. It is better suited to "relocate" to the deep rear on it, and even take a ficus with you. It is in this, in the "human factor", and not at all in "poor hardening of the gear teeth", that the author sees the main reason for the mass loss of Red Army tanks in the summer of 1941.

Thursday, June 26

It was on this day, at 9 o'clock in the morning, in accordance with the new decision of the command of the South-Western Front, that a counterattack by four mechanized corps of the front against the enemy tank grouping that had broken through to Dubno was to begin. It was this day that became the first day of the tank battle.

Before proceeding to a detailed description of the course and result of this operation, we will try to present as accurately as possible the results of the four-day deployment of Soviet troops, their deployment, as well as the composition and disposition of enemy forces.

There was no front line, in the truest sense of the word, in Western Ukraine that day. There were separate areas of hostilities, separate lines of defense of the units of the 5th and 6th armies that had not yet lost their combat effectiveness, as well as roads and bridges along which (often mixed with each other) mechanized columns of Wehrmacht and Red Army tank divisions moved. In general, the situation is on the northern flank of Yu-3. f. formed as follows. On the

right flank of General Potapov's 5th Army, in the wooded and swampy region of the Ukrainian Polissya, the German infantry slowly advanced in the direction of Kovel. In the defense zone of the 6th army of General Muzychenko, the German infantry pushed the Soviet troops 40-50 km from the border, to the line of the cities of Yavorov and Zholkev (Nesterov). On the direction of the main attack, in a narrow 50-kilometer "corridor" at the junction of the 5th and 6th armies,

two enemy tank corps advanced: the 3rd tank corps as part of the 14th and 13th tank and 25th motorized divisions and the 48th TC as part of the 11th and 16th Panzer and 16th Motorized Divisions. They moved along two almost parallel routes: the 3rd shopping mall along the Ustilug-Lutsk-Rivne highway, and the 48th shopping mall along the Sokal-Berestechko-Dubna direction. -the exact location of each of the above divisions is almost impossible.

The 48th TC achieved the greatest advance: the 11th TD, advancing in the first echelon, having occupied Dubno with the main forces, advanced detachments were already advancing on Mizoch-Ostrog, divisions of the second echelon

corps (16th tank and 16th motorized) stretched for 50 km along the Berestechko-Kozin-Kremenets road.

The 3rd Tank Corps of the Wehrmacht, which met stubborn resistance from the Soviet troops on the Lutsk highway in the first days of the war, occupied Lutsk on June 25 at the cost of heavy losses, but could not move further to Rovno on the move. Then the German command decided to "rebuild the ranks" a little: the 14th TD and the 25th MD began to fight their way to the northeast, to the Goryn River in the area of Tsuman - Klevan - Derazhno, and the 13th TD went south to Dubno, probably with the aim of reaching the Dubno-Rovno highway.

Thus, three of the four German tank divisions (13th, 11th, 16th) were concentrated on the morning of June 26 in the vicinity of the city of Dubno. By the start of

hostilities, these three divisions had **only 438 tanks**, including **139 PZ-III**s with a 50-mm cannon and **60 PZ-IV**s. That's all the enemy forces that theoretically could take part in the "largest tank battle near Dubno." In fact, taking into account the losses suffered by the Germans during the four days of the offensive, they should have had even fewer combat-ready tanks.

As for another tank division, which was part of the 1st TGr of the Wehrmacht, it (9th TD), being in the reserve of the group commander, had not yet crossed the Soviet border by that time - and for a very simple reason. On June 26, Halder makes the following entry in his diary: "... von Wittersheim's tank corps, which is still in reserve, cannot

be moved to the front due to extremely bad roads, which are already overloaded with convoys and cannot be used to transfer tanks ..." [12]

What could the Yu-3 command oppose to these enemy forces. f.? The 22nd MK was already defeated,

the 16th MK was transferred to the Southern Front, the small and poorly equipped 24th MK remained in the front reserve, the most powerful 4th MK under the leadership of Vlasov and Muzychenko simply ignored the orders of the front and from participating in the intended counterattack withdrew. Thus, on the morning of June 26, only four mechanized corps could take part in a tank battle: the 9th, 19th, 15th and 8th.

A wedge driven by German tank divisions from the border to Dubno divided the shock grouping of the Southwestern Front into two unequal parts: the "northern" (9th MK

Rokossovsky and 19th MK Feklenko), which was supposed to strike at Dubno from the north -east, from the area of Rivne; - "southern" (8th MK Ryabyshev and 15th MK with the

8th Panzer Division of the 4th MK attached to it), which was to attack Dubno-Berestechko from the south, from the area of Brody.

Immediately, we note the very significant fact that the command of Yu-3. f. not only did not organize strong interaction and communication between the "southern" and "northern", but did not even inform the commanders about the plans and actions of the neighbors. So, General Ryabyshev writes

that only in the afternoon of June 27 at the command post of the corps "the head of the armored forces of the front, Major General R.N. Morgunov. He said ... that from the northeast to Dubno, the 9th mechanized corps of Major General K.K. Feklenko is from the Roeno area. This information was unexpected for me. Then General Morgunov left for the 15th mechanized corps, and no orders came from him ... "[113] In the report on the combat operations of the 43rd tank division (19th MK)

we read:

"... for the entire time of the march, up to 26.6.41, no information from the higher headquarters on the situation at the front, the headquarters of the division did not have. But what has changed since June

26? We read further: "... the headquarters of the division did not have any data on the enemy and the actions of our units at the front, our aviation also did not give anything for orientation in the situation ..." [8]

Twice Hero of the Soviet Union BC Arkhipov - in those days the commander of the reconnaissance battalion of the 43rd Panzer Division - in his memoirs writes:

"... when on the evening of June 26 ... our division reached Dubno, none of us knew that the 8th mechanized corps of General D.I. was successfully advancing towards us from the south. Ryabyshev ... a similar situation repeated itself the next day, when ... we and our neighbors, the arrows of the 36th corps,

went to the approaches to Dubno, but did not know that the 34th Panzer Division of Colonel I.V. had already burst into the city. Vasilyev from the 8th

mechanized corps..." [109] And here is how the situation was seen on the morning of June 28 by Popel, who was in the battle formations of the same 34th tank

division that broke into Dubno: "Where are they, promised by the Military Council front of the corps that should come to our aid? We are alone, completely alone, without neighbors,

communications, information... The front is unknown where..." [105] And this despite the fact that on the morning

of June 28, 1941, the "northern" and "southern" groups were separated by a few kilometers! We open the memoirs of Marshal Rokossovsky, we read: "... no one was instructed to unite the actions of the three corps. They were introduced into battle separately and on the move ... According to individual reports, to some extent it was possible to judge what was happening in our direction. We did not know how things were going in the sectors of other armies of the Southwestern Front. Apparently, General Potapov was not

in the best position. His headquarters during the entire time that I commanded the 9th mechanized corps, has never been able to help us in this regard ... "[111] To this should be added the fact that all commanders in all reports unanimously speak about the absence of any - any interaction with aviation, which did not cover the battle formations of the advancing tank units, and did not provide them with any intelligence information. It is already impossible to find a reasonable explanation for this, since Yu-3 aviation. f. numbered at that time at least one and a half thousand aircraft and performed (according to reports) an average of 550 sorties per day! Where did they fly to? What could be a more important task these days than supporting

Somehow it becomes awkward in describing such a helpless and stupid leadership for the third time to quote Napoleon's thought about military happiness. Let's better give its worthy Russian equivalent - "there is no reception against scrap."

Even taking into account the losses and confusion of the first days of the war, the Southwestern Front still had huge

forces at its disposal. Be that as it may, but as part of the "southern" strike group alone, despite all the mysterious "tank case" of the first

days of the war, there were still about **a thousand tanks - twice as many** as the enemy. The qualitative superiority was also indisputable: about two hundred of the latest KB and T-34s against 139 medium (in every sense of the word) PZ-III / 50 tanks in three German tank

divisions. A noteworthy detail is that Halder, whose diary entries in the first days of the war were generally permeated with a spirit of extreme self-confidence, writes on June 26, 1941:

“... the enemy is constantly pulling up new fresh forces from the depths against our tank wedge ... the transfer of infantry divisions to cover the southern flank is impossible due to the lack of free forces. Let us trust in God...” Of

course, F. Halder, who sold his soul to the Hitler regime, should not take the name of God in vain. But judging by how events unfolded in the future, the Germans themselves did not blunder. We have to admit that the German command found the most correct decision, exactly corresponding to the situation - the German tank divisions were saved from the inevitable defeat by FLIGHT.

Yes exactly. There was no tank battle (similar to the battle of Prokhorovka in June 1943) in June 1941. German tanks fled from the battlefield near Dubno - only they fled not back, but forward, to the east, into the deep rear of the Southwestern Front. And to defeat the Soviet mechanized corps was entrusted to the German infantry, which, taking advantage of the sluggishness of the Yu-3 command. f., managed to walk from the border to the Berestechko-Dubno line before the Soviet tank divisions could turn around for the offensive. Of course, if the Wehrmacht in June 1941 had been opposed by an organized, controlled, able and willing to fight army, then such a decision by the command would have led the German troops in Ukraine to death. The infantry thrown under the tanks would have been defeated, and the tank units cut off from the supply lines would have driven themselves into a trap in which they were to die without fuel and ammunition. But the German

generals already understood (or intuitively felt) with whom they were dealing. The panic that engulfed the troops and command of the Southwestern Front after the breakthrough of German tanks on Ostrog-Shepetovka turned out to be the most effective weapon,

much more powerful than the small-caliber guns of German tanks, and the stubbornness and stamina of the German infantry turned out to be stronger than the armor and fire of the mechanized

corps of the Red Army. Let us return, however, to a consistent presentation of events. In the early morning of June 26, the 43rd Panzer Division of the 19th Mechanized Corps moved into battle from the area south of Rovno. Unfortunately, the "tank death" did not bypass this division, which covered itself in those tragic days with unfading glory: out of 237 tanks, a consolidated tank group went on the attack, consisting of: 2 KB tanks, 2 T-34 tanks and 75 T

We learn about how events unfolded from the surviving report of the commander of the 43rd TD, Colonel I.G. Tsibin: "... the

command of the 43rd division stopped the retreating infantry and artillery of the 228th rifle division, located them and entering the battle together with a tank division. After the necessary order was restored, a decision was made to launch an immediate attack... The artillery of the division (43rd gap), moving on a tractor traction at

a speed of 6 km per hour, was still on the way and could not open fire by the beginning of the attack. The division did not have a single sortie at its disposal, so the division headquarters could not get any information about what was happening in the depths of the enemy's defenses, while the enemy aircraft continued to dominate the air, corrected fire and conducted surveillance behind our actions...

At 14:00, the division's tanks launched an attack with two KB tanks and two T-34 tanks in front, turned around on the move and, with heavy fire, disrupted the anti-tank defense system and the battle formation of the enemy infantry, which began to retreat to the west in disarray. Pursuing the enemy infantry, our tanks were met with fire from enemy tanks from ambush and from a place, but the KB and T-34s (of which there were only four in this division! - M.S.) rushed forward, the enemy tanks were attacked, and after them - and T-26 tanks ...

The enemy tanks, unable to withstand the fire and the rapid tank attack, began to retreat, lingering on the flanks, but were quickly knocked out by our tanks, which were maneuvering on the battlefield. Tanks KB and T-34, not having enough armor-piercing shells (?!? - M.S), fired fragmentation shells and crushed and destroyed enemy tanks and anti-tank guns with their mass ...

The battle lasted about 4 hours ... The enemy, retreating to Dubno, blew up the bridges behind him, thus depriving the division of the opportunity to break through to Dubno on the shoulders of its retreating infantry ... "[8]

Perhaps less accurately, but much more clearly, the commander of the reconnaissance battalion of the 43rd TD BC Arkhipov (who entered the war already with the rank of Hero of the Soviet Union and ended it twice as a Hero) describes this day. In his memoirs, he writes: "... when on

the evening of June 26 we drove the Nazis to Dubno, it was no longer a retreat, but a real flight. Parts of the 11th Panzer were mixed up, panic seized them. It was also reflected in the fact that, in addition to hundreds of prisoners, we captured many tanks and armored personnel carriers and about 100 motorcycles abandoned by the crews in good condition. On the approach to Dubno, already at dusk, the tankers of the 86th regiment saw that eight German medium tanks were attached to the tail of the column - apparently, they mistook them for their own. Their crews surrendered along with the vehicles at the very first request of our comrades. The prisoners, as a rule, were in a hurry to declare that they did not belong to the National Socialists, and very willingly testified. Such a psychological state of the Nazi troops, depression and panic, I had a chance to observe again very, very slowly - only after Stalingrad and the Battle of Kursk ... "[109] No, dear reader, a miracle, of course, did not happen. Tsibin's division, which had actually turned into a battalion of light tanks even before the battle, was unable to take Dubno

and defeat the two tank (11th and 13th) and three infantry (299th, 111th, 44th) enemy divisions drawn to this city, on which were armed with hundreds of 37 mm anti-tank guns, against which our old T-26 with its 15 mm bulletproof armor was defenseless. The 9th MK Rokossovsky could not help many. During the battle on June 26, he was never able to break through the defenses of the 299th Wehrmacht infantry division and reach the northwestern outskirts of Dubno.

In the next two days, the position of the "northern" grouping of Soviet troops deteriorated significantly. The Germans, having pulled up two more divisions from the Lutsk region (14th Panzer and 25th Motorized) from the 3rd Panzer Corps, themselves went on the offensive from Dubno to Rovno and further to the Goryn River. Rokossovsky recalls:

“... having left with a group of headquarters officers to a high-rise in the location of the fighting units of the 20th Panzer Division, I observed the movement of a huge column of enemy vehicles, tanks and artillery from Dubno towards Rovno. And from the south, German units were coming and going to our line of defense ...

”With heavy fighting, the remnants of the 9th and 19th mechanized corps were thrown back by June 29 at 40-70 km from Dubno, in the Klevan - Tuchin - Gosha area, where they entrenched themselves at the turn of the Goryn River.

Nevertheless, the fighters and commanders of Rokossovsky and Feklenko fulfilled their task with honor - a small and poorly armed "northern" group diverted **three of the four** tank divisions of the 3rd and 48th Wehrmacht corps, thereby greatly facilitating the situation much more powerful "southern" group. Figuratively speaking, the desperate attack of the 19th and 9th mechanized corps forced the Germans to turn their faces to the northwest, thereby exposing their almost unprotected back under the blow of a huge tank "cleaver". Most likely, the Germans did not understand this then. It is strange and regrettable that the

commanders of the Red Army, apparently, did not know either the real balance of forces, or the full benefits of their position.

Here is how Popel (whose personal bravery cannot be doubted) describes the meeting that took place at the headquarters of the 8th MK on the eve of the offensive: reconnaissance,

from five tank and four mechanized divisions ... I estimated on a piece of paper - five tank and four mechanized - about two thousand (??? - M.S.) tanks ... The numerical and technical superiority of the Germans forced us .. ." Etc. If such information (more precisely, disinformation) was at the disposal of the fathers-commanders, then is it any wonder the depressed mood of the fighters? "...I heard fragments of phrases: - He (the enemy. - M.S.) on your "beta" (BT tank. -

M.S.) five tanks and ten guns...

- Interesting, brothers, how many in our company tomorrow for dinner on contentment will remain ... "[105]

But this is not trifles. It is difficult to count on success when soldiers go into battle with a feeling of such doom... The phrase

about the "technical superiority of the Germans" is also not accidental. From the further description it follows that Popel (and he was not an ordinary tanker, but a deputy commander of a mechanized corps) was not at all informed about the weaknesses and strengths of the enemy's military equipment:

"... the tank formations of the enemy were the least known to us. We had some idea of the tanks used in Spain. But, firstly, only light vehicles participated there, and secondly, after Spain, the Germans, of course, made changes to the design of tanks ... "Unbelievable. Why, then, did the Tevosyan commission visit all

German tank factories in 1940? Why then was the best German tank PZ-III purchased at that time, why was it driven at the test site in Kubinka? Where, then, did the results of these tests go, during which all characteristics were removed from the "troika", up to noise? "... the Germans shot down the bridge, and a projectile crashed right into the forehead of the tank crossing ... And it, as if nothing had happened, turns

right and heads in our direction. It turns out that the German anti-tank guns do not take frontal armor. Helpful discovery! It lifts the spirit of our people... I am transmitting my observations of the fascist anti-tank artillery to the regiment commander's network. In response, I hear Volkov's voice:

"Thank you for the good news..." [105] Useful **discovery?!?** Yes, the Soviet Union in the thirties bought this same 37-mm anti-tank gun from Germany!

Moreover, when during

field tests it turned out that the actual armor penetration was lower than declared, a big scandal began, which was resolved only a month later (it turned out that Soviet standards for assessing armor penetration were much tougher than German ones) [87]. So what happens, all these test reports, adorned with formidable "top secret" fifas, just lay dead weight in the safes?

After **the 8th MK** was forced to spend four days on meaningless marches, the front command demanded an immediate offensive - but not on Dubno, but from Brod to Berestechko. The choice of the direction of impact is at least strange. Even on the road map of Ukraine in 2002, it is impossible to find a single decent road between these cities. The area is covered with forest with many small streams. And from Brod to Dubno, the main highway goes through a completely open area - not a single "green" spot on the map.

The corps had to launch an attack without reconnaissance, without serious reconnaissance of the enemy, without artillery preparation. From the promised air division, not a single squadron appeared in the sky until the end of the day. In fact, deployed to the left of the offensive line of the mechanized corps, two rifle divisions (139th and 141st), as Popel writes, "have never heard of the offensive of the corps. And could very help."

And yet - "there is no reception against scrap." Despite all the ugly preparation and organization of the offensive, **on June 26, the 8th MK achieved serious success.**

12th Panzer Division, Major General T.A. Mishanina, with the support of artillery and motorized infantry, overcame the swampy terrain and by 11 o'clock in the morning crossed the Slonovka River. By 4 p.m., in a fierce battle, the 24th tank regiment of this division captured the village of Leshnev (20 km north of Brod). Leshnev also had his first tank battle. Popel describes it this way:

"... there are about fifty German tanks in front of us ... Tanks (this is now visible) medium - PZ-III and PZ-IV ... "

These figures are, of course, greatly exaggerated. In the German 11th Panzer Division, before the start of hostilities, there were only 67 such tanks. Then there were losses in the battle on June 23 near Radekhov, and there were losses during the breakthrough from Radekhov to Dubno. On the afternoon of June 26, the 11th TD part of the forces fought north of Dubno with the 19th MK, at the same time it began to advance to the east, from Dubno to Ostrog. So only a small group of German tanks could meet with the tanks of the 8th MK near Leshnev (50 km

west of Dubno). Be that as it may, it follows from Popel's memoirs that few the surviving German tanks were forced to flee:

“... the Germans faltered and, under the cover of a PZ-IV platoon, took to their heels. They fled frankly, helplessly, cowardly ... Our KB shocked the imagination of the Nazis ...”
The 34th TD of Colonel I.V., advancing on the

right flank of the 8th mechanized corps, Vasilyeva, by the end of the day on June 26, occupied the town of Khotyn (25 km north of Brod) and entered the Berestechko-Kremenets road. Less than 15 km remained to Berestechko. Parts of the 34th Panzer Division destroyed three motorcycle battalions, 10 tanks and 12 guns, captured more than 200 soldiers and officers of the 48th Panzer Corps of the Wehrmacht [105]. It would seem that a little more - and the emerging success could be turned into a breakthrough on an operational scale. And these are by no means

amateurish projects. General Ryabyshev in his

post-war memoirs writes:

“Sending a report to the front headquarters about the successful actions of the corps, I believed that the commander would decide to build on the success of the corps, defeat the enemy and push him back to the border ...” [113] It is worth noting the gratifying fact that success was achieved at the cost of minimal losses military equipment: the 12th tank division lost 8 tanks in battle, another 2 got stuck in swamps, the losses of the 34th TD amounted to only 5 tanks [166].

It was up to the "small" - to finally achieve active action from the 15th mechanized corps rushing through the forests, to establish interaction with the infantry and artillery, to cover the advancing tanks from the air - and then only a miracle could save the Germans from defeat. Miracles sometimes happen. Most often they are

made by people themselves. Remember how in books about ancient times they write: the criminal put his head on the chopping block, the executioner waved his ax - and just then the messenger jumps with the decree of "our good king" about pardon ...

So, if the “criminal” is the German invaders, the “scaffold” is Dubno, the “axe” is the mechanized corps of the Red Army, then who then acted as the “good king”?

Commanding

In the description of N.K. Popelya events unfolded
So:

"... into the dugout (command post of the 34th TD Colonel Vasilyev. - M.S.) Oksen (chief of counterintelligence of the corps. - M.S.) burst into the dugout. Barely saying hello, without apologizing, which was unusual for a balanced, invariably polite scout, he approached to me.

- Six Red Army soldiers were detained in the rear of the division. They claim that Mishanin's division (12th TD - M.S.) is rapidly retreating, two generals surrendered ... They swear that they saw the departure of the division with their own eyes, but they know about the capture of the generals from words. The division, if you believe them, retreats in a herd through the forest to the south ... "

It was not possible to establish radio contact with either the corps headquarters or the command post of Mishanin's tank division. The radios were silent. Extremely alarmed, Popel rushed on a T-34 tank through a coniferous forest burning after repeated daytime bombardments to Brody. But in the forest on the eastern outskirts of the city, at the place where the headquarters of the corps was located

during the day, there was already no one: "... Not a soul. Empty dugouts. The wind

lazily drives scraps of papers ... "Soon, the car of the deputy chief of intelligence of the corps, Major Petrenko, drove into the forest clearing. He also confirmed the veracity of the incredible reports:

"...Mishanin's division left the front line... On the way, we ran into Mishanin fighters several times. They wander anyhow. The commanders are not visible ... They assure that General Mishanin ordered to retreat to Brody, and he himself, together with the corps commander, surrendered ... "

The genre of this book is historical non-fiction, not pulp fiction. Therefore, we will not further intrigue the reader, especially since nothing mysterious has happened. No X-rays, no German landings, no earthquakes in the swampy forest - just the 8th mechanized corps was once again covered by a "shock wave" from another insane order from the command of the South Western Front. Marshal Baghramyan proudly reports in his memoirs: "There was not even a shadow of confusion at the

front headquarters!"

Let's not argue. Let's take our word for it. There was no confusion.

Everything else - communications, intelligence, reliable information about the state of their troops and enemy troops, firmness and

there was also no consistency in decision-making.

On the evening of June 26, on the basis of panic rumors (which inevitably, like lice on a prisoner in a concentration camp, start up in the rear of a demoralized army) at Yu-3 headquarters. f. came to the conclusion that the counterattack that had begun in the morning had already ended in failure. The operational report of the headquarters of the South-Western Front No. 09 dated 06/26/1941 reported: "The 8th mechanized corps at 9.01 on June 26 hesitantly attacked the enemy's mechanical units in the Brody area and ... was stopped by the enemy in the initial (?! - M.S.)

to attack area ... " Already this assessment of the situation, adopted at the very time when the 19th and 8th mechanized corps were driving fairly battered Germans to Dubno from both sides, was completely

inadequate to reality. Well, the decision made on the basis of such an assessment was completely already strange.

"The word was taken by the chief of staff of the front, - remembering! Bagramyan. - His idea boiled down to the fact that ... it is necessary to place the 36th and 37th rifle corps, approaching from the depths, on the Dubno-Kremenets-Zolochiv line with the task of holding the enemy in stubborn defense. Withdraw the mechanized corps beyond this line" [110].

Where is the logic, where are the traces of common sense? Even if we proceed from the fact that the mechanized corps of the front, which at that time still had 1,500 tanks, were unable to defeat the enemy or, at least, delay his advance, then what were the grounds for hoping that the two rifle corps could cope with such a task? Didn't the front headquarters still know that rifle divisions, staffed to a large extent by conscripts from the

western regions of Ukraine, scatter in crowds after the very first shots? And how can you set the task of "taking it beyond this line", when there was still no equipped defensive line on the Dubno-Kremenets-Zolochiv line, and the infantry of the 36th and 37th rifle corps had just entered this area ? It is noteworthy that G.K. Zhukov (chief of the General Staff and plenipotentiary representative of the Stavka on the Southwestern Front) directly warned against such a decision: "... having learned that Kirponos intends to place the 36th and

37th rifle corps approaching from the depths on the defensive line of Dubno

- Kremenets - New Pochayuv, he resolutely opposed such use of the troops of the second echelon of the front. - If you strike, then with all your might! ...Before flying to Moscow on June 26, G.K. Zhukov once again demanded from Kirponos to collect everything possible for a decisive counterattack ... "[110] The complete

failure of the decision made on the evening of June 26 (which Bagramyan, even in his post-war memoirs, without a shadow of embarrassment calls "the most appropriate operational decision for the changed situation") came to light in a few hours, on the morning of June 27th.

Let's continue reading Bagramyan's memoirs:

"... we had no time to receive reports about the return of the 8th and 15th mechanized corps to their former lines, when the news swept through the headquarters: fascist tanks rushed to Ostrog. There is alarm at the headquarters of the front (but not a shadow of confusion! - M.S.) ... Colonel Bondarev excitedly reported that today (June 27. - M.S.) at dawn, the 11th German Panzer Division made a swift breakthrough from the area Dubno. Having thrown back to the south the units of the right-flank division of the 36th Rifle Corps that were on the march, it is now advancing almost unhindered towards Ostrog ... "

That's the whole "defensive line occupied by rifle corps"! But even before the

German tank units began to "flight" from the battlefield near Dubno to the east, to the decision of the Yu-3 command. f. Moscow responded. On the night of June 26-27 at Yu-3 headquarters. f. the BODO high-frequency telegraph communication device was launched. Bagramyan recalls: "... I run to the

negotiation room, pick up the tape, read: "General Malandin (Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Red Army. - M.S.) is at the apparatus. Hello. Immediately report to the commander that the Headquarters has forbidden the withdrawal and demands to continue the counterattack. Not a day to give rest

to the aggressor. All". I hasten to Kirponos. After listening to my report, he quietly cursed ... "The

quiet curse of the big authorities resounded deafeningly in the troops.

At dawn on June 27, Popel finally found the headquarters of his mechanized corps on the

southern outskirts of Brod: "... we saw the corps commander on the side of the KB. Near the tank, without stopping, Ryabyshev paced back and forth as if wound up. I saw every comcor. But never like this... Ryabyshev, barely nodding to me, took a piece of paper folded in half from his

breast pocket: There are several lines on the sheet, written in calligraphic clerk's handwriting. Round, with uniform thickenings of the letters, leaning against one another, leaned to the right.

"The 37th Rifle Corps is defending on the front of Nov. Nechaev - Podkamen - Zolochev.

The 8th mechanized corps to withdraw behind the line of the 37th sk and reinforce its battle formation with its own firepower. Exit start immediately. Below

is the signature: "Commander of the Southwestern Front, Colonel General Kirponos." And above the brackets there was a sweeping squiggle

from the bottom up... Some kind of passenger car was approaching from the south. Stopped nearby. A familiar colonel from the front headquarters got out of it. Unshaven, his eyes red from sleepless nights, he greeted us dryly and handed Ryabyshev an envelope. Dmitry Ivanovich tore off the wax seal, and we saw the same round, wearily leaning letters to the right and the same signature - a squiggle. Only the text is completely different - the corps will advance from the Brody area in the direction of Verba-Dubno in the morning and capture Dubno by evening. Ryabyshev looked dumbfounded at the

colonel: "And the previous order?" The Colonel was not inclined to enter into discussion. - The last one is being carried out, as you know. The Colonel was already returning to his

car. I caught up with him. — I

have a number of questions... The Colonel turned around in displeasure. — What other questions? If you received an order,

follow it..." [105] At this point, dear reader, we will interrupt our story about the tragic

get to know the person who put his signature in a scribble next to the words "Commander of the Southwestern Front." People who personally knew General Kirponos speak of him in different ways. Marshal K.S.

Moskalenko writes about him warmly and respectfully: "... he was a militarily educated person and proved to be a brave and strong-willed commander during the war with the White Finns ... the brave, courageous general died in the days of severe trials, leaving behind a kind and bright memory in the hearts of those

who knew him..."

Commissar Popel gives a more ambiguous assessment of the commander: "...

an impeccably brave and determined person, he is not yet ripe for such a post. We talked about this more than once among ourselves, we spoke calmly, not seeing a big trouble here in peacetime, forgetting that the border district would turn to the front with the outbreak of hostilities ...

"Mikhail

Petrovich Kirponos died on the battlefield on September 20, 1941 at attempt to get out of the encirclement east of Kiev. Whatever the circumstances of his death (there are three versions: death in battle, suicide, special officers carried out Stalin's secret order to prevent the capture of the top command staff of the front), he gave his life for the Motherland, and this circumstance forces the author to be extremely restrained in his assessments.

Let's give General Kirponos the right to tell about himself on his own - fortunately, we have an autobiography written by Kirponos on October 21, 1938 [VIZH, 1989, No. 7]. Let us cite it with slight abbreviations and very brief comments: "I was born on January 9, 1892 in Verkievka, Chernihiv province, in the

family of a poor peasant. The household had half a tithe of land, a hut, and nothing more. My father worked for a long time as a cupmaker in a tea shop (what kind of "peasant" is this? - M.S.) in our town ...

He began to study at the parochial school in 1899. In 1900 he moved to the zemstvo school in his own town ... General education - he graduated from 3 groups of the zemstvo school and in 1903 entered the 2-class

school and the Borzensky school of horticulture, but could not study there because of the difficult financial situation of my parents ... in forest

nurseries) with a salary of 12 rubles. per month. I served in this forestry until September 1915, i.e. before mobilization into the tsarist army. I was on the Romanian front from August 1917 to February 1918 in the 258th regiment as a company paramedic... During the October Revolution, I led agitation for Bolshevism among the soldiers. Here I was elected chairman of the regimental committee, a member of the divisional revolutionary committee ... Upon my return from the Romanian front, I initiated the organization of red partisan detachments to fight the counter-revolution ... In September 1918, from the borders of Ukraine, he fled to the territory of the RSFSR, where he joined the ranks 1st Soviet division of the insurgent troops of Ukraine ... Held positions: pom. division chief, chairman of the Revolutionary Tribunal, commander of the 2nd Bogunsky

shelf...

On July 1, 1919, by order of Comrade Shchors, he was appointed assistant head of the school of Red commanders in the city of Zhytomyr ... Due to illness at the same school, he switched to non-combat work - the secretary of the military commissar of the school ... In May 1920, he was appointed to the 2nd Kiev school of red foremen, where he worked in positions from the commander of the economic team to the commissioner of the school.

From the 23rd to the 27th year - study at the Military Academy of the Red Army. Frunze. In January 1931, he was appointed chief of staff of the 51st Rifle Division in Odessa, in April 1934, from the post of chief of staff, he was appointed head of the Kazan Infantry School, where I still work.

Public work: during the period of the struggle against the opposition, he actively worked to expose and withdraw from the Kharkiv school the red foremen of the "ukapists", maintaining close contact with the Cheka. While studying at the Military Academy in the classroom, he revealed the anti-party face of the opposition. In 1927, Polischuk, political instructor, was exposed by me as a Trotskyist.

In connection with his exposure, other Trotskyists were also identified ... In the Kazan Infantry School, he took an active part in exposing the enemies of the people Gobasov, Yusupov, Obryvaev, Pavlovsky and others ... In 1937, on my initiative, the deputy chairman of the Zelenodolsk City Council was involved and convicted for the criminal attitude to the compilation of voter lists ... Never any hesitation and deviations from the general line

I didn't and don't have a party.

In 1937, a party penalty was imposed - a reprimand without entering into a personal file for overlooking fraud when passing the TRP standards of the 2nd stage. I

married in 1911 to a citizen. (So in the text. - M.S.) Olimpiada Vasilievna Polyakova (the daughter of a saddler), divorced her in 1919. After the divorce, my daughters were brought up with me ... The second time I married in 1919 Sofya Alexandrovna Piotrovskaya. I have three daughters from my second wife. My wife was born in Zhytomyr, she is Polish by nationality. Her father served as a watchman at the State Bank, they lived very poorly all the time. Before the revolution, the wife's father worked in restaurants as a waiter, and her mother prepared home-cooked meals without the use of hired force.

My wife's brother, Yan Piotrovsky, went to Poland in 1924 or 1925, where he is and what he is doing, neither I nor my wife know ... My wife's father in 1930 was expelled from Zhitomir to Alma-Ata, where his wife and daughter Rozalia went... The wife believes that she has no father, mother, brother and sister, and was not and is not interested in their fate (merciless to the enemies of the people. - M.S). Why my wife's father was expelled, neither I nor my wife know, but the wife understands that her father obviously deserved it, and therefore she did not show and does not

show any pity for him ... " Such is the biography. The man is purely modest in his claims (from 17 to 23 he worked as a forester), who grew up in the family of a rural lumpen proletarian. He never gravitated toward military service; he avoided the front of the "imperialist war" as best he could.

A caring father and a faithful husband - another would quickly divorce the daughter of a repressed Pole. The "stain" in the personal file was washed away by the most diligent cooperation with the "authorities". The peak of career growth is three years as division chief of staff. Before and after that - in non-combatant positions from supply manager to head of an infantry school in a provincial outback. Mention about studying

Military Academy. Frunze should not mislead us - what and how was taught in this "academy" if the students were people with incomplete primary education? In fact, it was a closed, "elite" educational program, in which illiterate nominees were brought up to the level of a seven-year secondary school.

Everything is relative. In order for the reader to appreciate the biography of the commander of the Southwestern Front, we will give brief information about the commander of the German Army Group South, Field Marshal Rundstedt.

He was 17 years older than Kirponos, born in 1875 in the family of a general in the Prussian army. He graduated from the military school in Oranienstein, in 1893 he was promoted to lieutenant. In 1907 he graduated from the Military Academy. During World War I, he was an officer of the General Staff, then chief of staff of the 53rd Army Corps on the Eastern Front, and by the end of the war, chief of staff of the 15th Corps in France. For military merit and personal courage, he was awarded the Iron Crosses of the 1st and 2nd classes and the Order of the House of Hohenzollern.

After the defeat of Germany, he remained to serve in the Reichswehr. At the end of 1932, Rundstedt was appointed commander of the 1st Army Group in Berlin. In November 1938, he resigned due to the fact that he spoke out against the occupation of the Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia (what would happen to a Soviet general who, for example, would "oppose" the liberation of Western Ukraine?). In May 1939 he returned to serve in the Wehrmacht. During the invasion of Poland, he commanded Army Group South, which occupied Warsaw. During the French campaign, Rundstedt commanded Army Group A, which broke through the front at Sedan and surrounded the main Allied forces at Dunkirk. After the

victory in France, he receives the highest military rank of Field Marshal. The appointment of a commander of this level to the post of commander of one of the three Wehrmacht army groups on the Eastern Front looks understandable and logical. But how could the former head of the Kazan

It's all about the war. Finnish. The head of the infantry school was drafted into the army and became the commander of the 70th rifle division. In the last days of the war, the Kirponos division accomplished a feat - terrible, bloody, absolutely meaningless.

In accordance with the terms of the peace treaty, the city of Vippuri (Vyborg) was to go to the Soviet Union. There was absolutely no need to storm it - it was necessary to calmly wait for 12 noon on March 13, 1940. But someone (maybe the commander of the S-3. f. S.K. Timoshenko, maybe the "owner" himself) decided that the inglorious and highly dubious "victory" must be crowned with a heroic assault on something, somewhere. As part of the general plan for the assault on Vyborg, the 70th Infantry Division was instructed to bypass the city on the ice of the Gulf of Finland and "cut off the escape routes of the Finnish troops encircled in the city" - and this despite the fact that the order and timing of this withdrawal had already been agreed upon at negotiations in Moscow!

Of course, the Finns did not deny themselves the pleasure of teaching presumptuous aggressor.

The shells of the heavy guns of the coastal batteries broke through huge polynyas, living and dead Red Army soldiers disappeared into the icy water. The division commander Kirponos walked ahead of the attacking chains - in a word, Comrade Stalin could be completely pleased with the obedience of his subjects.

Those who were able to give such pleasure to the leader were showered with awards, titles, and new appointments. Commander of the 1st rank Timoshenko became Marshal and People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR, commander of the 7th Army, which stormed the Mannerheim Line, commander of the 2nd rank Meretskov became an army general and chief of the General Staff of the Red Army. The personal courage shown by Kirponos was not forgotten either - he received the Gold Star of the Hero and was appointed commander of the 49th

Rifle Corps. This is where Comrade Stalin would have stopped - but no, he really liked the modest and courageous newly minted Major General Kirponos. In June 1940, having jumped several rungs of the career ladder at once, the former head of the Kazan Infantry School was appointed to the post of ... commander of the troops of the Leningrad Military District! Under the command of Kirponos was a grouping of troops equal to the army of a large European state. But even that didn't seem enough! In February 1941, Stalin appointed G.K.

Zhukov to the post of chief of the General Staff, and the vacant office of the commander of the troops of the Kyiv OVO - the largest military district of the Soviet

Union - February 22, 1941 occupies Kirponos, who at the same time received the third promotion in 9 months in the military rank (colonel general). Neither England nor the United States had on that day a land army of such a size as the one that was to be led by a company paramedic of the First World War, recognized already in 1920 as fit only for non-

combatant. This is how Rokossovsky describes his report to the Yu-3 command f., held on July 15, 1941:

"... I was extremely surprised by his sharply conspicuous confusion ... he tried to calm himself, but he did not succeed. He listened absently to my condensed information about the situation in the sector of the 5th Army and the corps, then often interrupted, running up to the window with exclamations: "What is the air defense doing? Airplanes fly and no one shoots them down. Disgrace! "... Yes, it was confusion, because in the current situation at that time, another front commander, in my opinion, would not be up to air defense ... It seemed that he either did not know the situation, or did not want to know it . In those minutes, I finally came to the conclusion that such voluminous, complex and responsible duties are not up to this person, and woe to the troops entrusted to him. And woe to the troops entrusted to him...

Two commissioners

"Order received - carry out." The authorities, who now (on the morning of June 27) had to demonstrate to the Headquarters their readiness to "not give rest to the aggressor for a day", did not give the 8th mechanized corps a single day for a calm regrouping and deployment to new starting lines. And the corps really needed it.

First, the direction and depth of the upcoming offensive have changed significantly. True, the change was reasonable: from Brod to Dubno there is a highway, parallel to it - an embankment of the railway, the terrain is open, convenient for the advance of tanks. But on this road, the tank divisions of the corps still had to get out of the forest near Leshniuv-Khotin. After a fierce battle on June 26, they also needed to replenish fuel and ammunition.

Secondly, the leapfrog of orders did not pass without sad consequences. Some headquarters received an order to withdraw, others did not, parts of the corps were scattered to a depth of 20-30 km. Well, the 12th Panzer Division was seized by panic, the withdrawal of troops turned into a disorderly flight, and even the German aviation covered the accumulation of troops of the 12th TD in Brody. The decomposition in the division reached the point that General Mishanin, who was heavily shell-shocked during the bombing, was simply dragged into an abandoned tank and left alone in Brody, under the "supervision" of the same shell-shocked orderly. In order to put the division in order and return it to the initial line for the offensive, of course, it took time. But the front headquarters is now very

was in a hurry.

The most good-natured (at least in his memoirs) Bagramyan describes it this way: "... the corps commanders immediately

began to turn divisions to new directions, and this is not so easy to do. General Ryabyshev was engrossed in this task when Vashugin descended on him at the command post. Hot, energetic, Nikolai Nikolayevich angrily reprimanded the corps commander for being slow ... "" Angrily reprimanded ... "It happens. And from the memoirs of N.K. Popelya

you can find out what exactly was hidden behind these words:

"Ryabyshev turned around, picked up his cap from the ground, straightened his overalls and, with a somewhat solemn step, moved towards the lead car. A short black-moustachioed military man was coming out of it.

Ryabyshev drew himself

up: "Comrade member of the Front's Military Council..."

Car doors slammed. More and more new faces appeared before us - colonels, lieutenant colonels. I recognized some - the prosecutor, the chairman of the Military Tribunal ... Soldiers jumped out of the back of a lorry that closed the column. The one to whom the commander addressed did not listen to the report, did not raise his

hand to his temple. He walked, crushing the shrubbery with his polished boots, straight towards Ryabyshev. When he approached, he looked up into the wrinkled, high-cheeked face of the corps commander and asked in a voice choked with rage: "How much did you sell for, Judas?"

Ryabyshev stood at attention in front of the member of the Military Council, taken aback, not finding what to say, and we all looked at the short, well-built corps commissar in confusion. Dmitri Ivanovich spoke first: - You would listen, comrade of the corps ... - You, traitor, the field court will listen.
Here, under the pine

let's listen and shoot at the pine tree...

I could not stand it and stepped forward: -

It is still unknown what considerations are guided by those who, by order, forces us to give the territory taken to the enemy with a fight.

The corps commissar stopped ... In the voice of a member of the Military advice, subtle confusion:

- Who ordered you to give up the territory? What are you grinding? (It is incomprehensible to the mind - did Kirponos and Pupkaev really decide to withdraw the mechanized corps without the consent of Vashugin? - M.S.)

Dmitry Ivanovich reports. A member of the Military Council steps in front of us, hands clasped behind his back... He looks at his watch and orders Dmitry Ivanovich: "Report to me about your decision in

twenty minutes..." The corps commissar gave no time either for reconnaissance or for regrouping divisions. What to attack? Ryabyshev gets up and goes to the corps commissar walking alone.

"The Corps won't be able to finish regrouping until tomorrow morning. A member of the Military Council,

out of indignation, says almost in a whisper: - In twenty minutes, the decision - and forward. What is "forward"? "I order the offensive to begin immediately. If

you don't start, I'll remove you from office and put you on trial. We have to make a suicidal decision - to bring the corps into battle

in parts ... "[105] Here the author is forced to apologize to the reader for one (first and last) lyrical digression from the

topic. In the last decade, we have divorced many anti-communists. The most zealous of them are former employees of the Department of

Agitation and Propaganda of the Central Committee of the CPSU. You read, it happened that they angrily denounced and severely condemned the "totalitarian regime", and you think:

"Poor man, how did you suffer and suffer among them for so many years, how you suffocated from ideological oppression in your five-room apartment on the Moscow embankment!"

I have never been among "them", I expressed my attitude towards the totalitarian regime in 1987-1991, and therefore I do not suffer from any anti-commissar concerns today. I will not repeat the old and obscene gossip about "stupid commissars" who prevented our wise generals from commanding correctly. There were different commissioners. There were different generals. The same N.K. Popel raised the morale of the Red Army soldiers not in the party office, but in the turret of the lead tank. And judging by the result - and the task force of the 8th MK under the command of Popel turned out to be the only tank formation in the entire Red Army, which at the beginning of the war inflicted a serious, tangible blow on the Germans - then we have to admit that God did not offend Commissar Popel with his military talent. That's all for this, dear reader, let's not rush to "angrily scold"

Commissioner Vashugin for his unbridled rudeness. He wanted the best. It turned out the way it could, when a former regiment commander with an education that today

would not allow him to get a job as a plumber is appointed to the position of a member of the Military Council of the district (with the outbreak of war - the front).

Commissar Vashugin did not sit in the rear, he did not load "trophy" goods in the "ZIS", from the first days of the war he rushed along the front, every minute risking getting a Bandera bullet in the back or falling under the bombs of the outrageous German aviation with impunity. He saw that something incredible was happening: hundreds of tanks and guns abandoned on the side of the road, crowds of former Red Army soldiers wandering randomly, the wide-open doors of the district committees of the party, the corridors of which were littered with garbage - torn party cards and books of the immortal works of the

classics of Marxism. Commissar Vashugin knew only one explanation for this - sabotage. And was he really wrong? He knew only one way to restore order in an army falling apart before his eyes - execution on the spot. And what, dear reader, **is there any other way?** What could in that situation, among those "cadres" who are so

persistently raised the party, to be a real alternative to traveling along the front with a tribunal and a firing squad?

Commissar Vashugin brought down his anger not at all on those who should have been expended? Sheer truth. But is it his personal fault - or is it an inevitable misfortune that comes to everyone who gladly sold his soul to inhuman, lawless power? Commissar Vashugin gave himself the

answer to all these questions. Two days later, returning to the headquarters of the front, he went to his office and shot himself. And Commissar Popel

went through the whole war, lived to see victory. For a long 48 years, Vashugin was also survived by the hero of the Civil War, who was almost shot by him, the commander of a cavalry regiment in the 1st Cavalry Army, who had been awarded three Orders of the Red Banner by Lieutenant General Ryabyshev even before the start of World War II. According to their memoirs, we will try to restore the tragic story of the death

of the 8th mechanized corps. On the morning of June 27, in the forest on the southern outskirts of Brod, the following decision was made: a strike group was created as part of the 34th tank division of Colonel Vasiliev, the 24th tank regiment of the 12th TD, the 27th motorized rifle regiment of the 7th honey, the corps motorcycle regiment . 15 T-34 tanks from the 23rd Tank Regiment of the 12th Tank Division were also transferred to reinforce the group. The logic by which it was these units that entered the strike group was very simple - those units that either did not receive a night order

to withdraw, or were not in a hurry to fulfill it, should have gone on the offensive on Dubno. The second (smaller) half of the corps - the 7th motorized rifle division (without the 27th infantry regiment), the 12th tank division (without the 24th tank

regiment), auxiliary and technical units - was supposed to launch an offensive the next day, June 28. Vashugin appointed Popel as the commander of the strike group, admonishing him with such a kind party

word: "Take Dubno by evening, receive an award. No - we will expel from the party and shoot ... "[105] Based on the organizational structure of the mechanized corps of the Red Army, it turns out that Popel's group had the gr

mechanized corps. True, such a conclusion does not coincide with the figures that Ryabyshev cites in his memoirs. So, he writes that 303 tanks remained in the corps (minus the Popel group), including 46 KB and 49 T-34s.

From the documents cited in [166], it follows that the strike group had about 220 tanks (including about fifty KB and T-34s), more than nine thousand personnel. At 14:00 on June 27, 1941, a steel avalanche

moved towards Dubno. Let us give the floor to the commander of the strike group, Commissioner N.K. Popelyu: "... the infantry battalion and the

company of enemy tanks defending the village of Granovka were taken by surprise. To the guns, to the tanks, into the trenches, the German soldiers rushed in their underpants - sunbathing.

Volkov dealt with the enemy barrier so quickly that the main forces did not even have to slow down.

Our motorcyclists walked along the entire width of the highway. To the right of them, along over the railway, tanks with guns turned to the left were moving. When from the hillock I saw this overflowing avalanche, I experienced that special joy that the consciousness of one's own strength gives ...

The battle unfolded on a wide, shimmering golden rye field ten kilometers southwest of Dubno ... By nightfall, the encircled enemy grouping was over

"

According to Popel, apart from the destroyed enemy equipment, 30 tanks and up to fifty guns abandoned by the Nazis were captured only in good condition. The rear of the 11th Panzer Division of the Wehrmacht was destroyed. The victory did not come without losses. In that battle, the commander of a tank regiment, Nikolai Dmitrievich Bolkhovitin, died in a burning tank. But the German infantry, stubbornly defending the city, had to experience for themselves what it was like to be hit by a terrible tank "cleaver". "... On the

pavement, on the seats and wings of smoking cars, in the carts of broken motorcycles, there are corpses. Even on the trees there are pieces of bodies, bloody grey-green rags... It's scary to look at our tanks now. It is hard to believe that their real color is protective, and not red-brown, which cannot be washed off by a fine drizzle ... "

Authentic military documents refute Popel's story that his battle group occupied Dubno - further from the town of Small Gardens

they failed to advance on the southern outskirts of the city [166, p. 195]. But this detail does not negate the main thing - the most important supply line for German tank divisions was blocked.

June 27-30

On the previous pages of this book, there were many (too many, as some reader will probably say) critical remarks about the Red Army of the 1941 model. For the sake of truth, it's time to say that the enemy was exceptionally strong, and at that time it was hardly possible to cope with him by any other army in the world. The strength of the Wehrmacht was, of

course, not in the "multiple numerical superiority", which was not even in sight, not in the mythical "surprise of the attack", and even more so not in the "technical superiority" of the skinny German tankettes.

The strength was in something else: in the common confidence for everyone - from the general to the private - in their invincibility, in their superiority over any enemy, in the uncompromising firmness of the command and

the stamina of the troops. We have to admit that the breakthrough of the Soviet tank wedge in the rear of the main strike force of the Wehrmacht did not cause even a shadow of confusion among the German generals.

The panicked cry: "We are surrounded" did not come out. Not a single Wehrmacht tank division interrupted for an hour its steady advance to the east.

Having escaped from the trap at Dubno, the 11th TD already captured Ostrog on June 27, crossed the Goryn River and moved straight along the highway to Shepetovka, the most important railway junction of Left-Bank Ukraine. The divisions of the 3rd tank corps of the Wehrmacht (13th and 14th tank corps, 25th motorized), developing the offensive from Dubno to the northeast, occupied Rovno by the end of the day on June 28 and the next day reached the Goryn River in the

strip Gosha - Tuchin. At the same time, in order to localize the breakthrough of Soviet tanks near Dubno, the German command hastily pulled four infantry divisions (111, 44, 57, 75th) from other sectors of the front, as well as part of the forces of the 16th tank and 16th motorized divisions from the 48th Tank Corps.

In parentheses, we note that the very fact of the appearance of German infantry near Dubno (120 km from the border) already on the fifth or sixth day of the war clearly indicates what the "fierce resistance" of the Soviet troops really was. For infantry on foot, 20 km a day is the pace of the march, and the march is forced. So, in October 1939, it was precisely in these places, on the territory of occupied Eastern Poland, for the withdrawal of German and Soviet troops to the agreed line of the new border, just such a schedule of 20 km per day was established for the movement of marching columns [1, p. 130]. In other words, there was no time for the German infantry to fight at such (20 km per day) rates of advance ...

The mobility of the German troops, the speed and perseverance of the decisions of the German generals had to be countered by the no less promptness of the Soviet headquarters. Alas, in the summer of 1941 such a task was completely unbearable for the command of the Red Army. Unfortunately, we have to state that such an assessment is applicable even to the best of the best, even to those who, by their personal courage and self-sacrifice, have earned the eternal memory of grateful descendants.

Having captured Dubno on the night of June 27-28, Popel's group stopped and, without even making a single attempt to develop success, began organizing all-round defense. It was not the enemy who forced them, but it was the erroneous decision of the command that stopped the further advance of the tank wedge in the rear of the enemy strike force. In his memoirs, N.K. Popel writes so directly: "...

here it is, a city recaptured from the enemy. The fighters walk the streets, examine the houses, the holes in the tank armor, joke with the "panenki" that crawled out of the basements ... German aviation does not appear. The front is unknown where, even the cannonade is not heard. What is the defense here? It was necessary to overcome this carefree victorious intoxication ... Political workers, commanders, communists, Komsomol members, agitators - all the power of educational influence should rebuild the mind of a fighter, inspire him with one indisputable truth: steadfast defense will

give success ... "It is not entirely clear who was the author of such a suicidal decision. Popel in his book does not explain at all what made him and Colonel Vasiliev abandon a further offensive along the Dubno-Rovno highway, to the rear of the 3rd tank corps

enemy. True, Ryabyshev writes that the order he received on the morning of June 27

demand: "... to drive the enemy out of Dubno, **then move on to all-round defense** in the Dubno, Smordva-Pelcha region and be ready for an offensive as part of a counterstrike grouping" [113].

On the other hand, it can be understood from Bagramyan's memoirs (although this is not clearly indicated) that no "stop" was planned after the capture of Dubno.

We repeat once again and remind the reader: the fighters and commanders of the Popel group broke into the operational rear of the enemy, inflicted huge losses on him, and later on, with their stubborn resistance, they fettered six enemy divisions. Their feat should be inscribed in golden letters in the annals of the Great Patriotic War. Nevertheless, it must be said frankly that the decision taken on the morning of June 28 to go over to the defensive was deeply erroneous - the "victorious drunkenness" in the tank troops should not be overcome, but used to develop the offensive.

"The offensive of tanks becomes aimless if it does not turn into pursuit. Only pursuit can consolidate the gains made in previous battles. Therefore, each tank commander must strive to continue the offensive with all combat-ready vehicles and conduct it as long as there is enough fuel ... The willpower of a person should in this case not be inferior to the indefatigability of a tank engine ... Only in this way can subsequent battles be facilitated or completely avoided ... Each gained quarter of an hour is valuable and can have a decisive influence on military operations," writes G. Guderian, an outstanding theorist of tank warfare, who repeatedly confirmed the correctness of his theories in practice [65]. He is echoed by the commander of the 3rd Panzer Group of the Wehrmacht G. Goth.

In his book "Tank Operations" he writes:

"... the success achieved thanks to the bold and swift actions of tank formations must be used in order to retain the operational initiative ... Holding down the mobility of tank formations, which is their best defense, keeping them in one place for a long time contradicts the very nature and purpose of this kind of troops ... "[13]

Alas, Popel's group stood idle in Dubno not for a quarter of an hour, but for two and a half

days! During this time, the enemy managed to do a lot: he threw back the 9th MK and 19th MK 70 km northeast of Dubno, created a dense encirclement ring around Dubno from infantry divisions, caught up with panic by breaking through the 11th Panzer Division to Ostrog - Shepetovka .

On the other hand, the command of the Southwestern Front could neither appreciate nor build on the success achieved at Dubno. And what kind of "development of success" are we talking about if in THREE DAYS the Popel group did not receive Yu-3 from the headquarters. f. no information, no help, no instructions! Only in the evening of June 30, a new front order was delivered to the group by plane: to find and destroy some mythical "group of 300 enemy tanks standing in the forest without fuel and ammunition." Radio communication with Popel was established and stubbornly tried to maintain it ... only German intelligence. In Russian, on behalf of General Ryabyshev, the enemy radio operator thanked for "valor and heroism" and tried to find out the location of the group's headquarters. No one else got in touch with the properly functioning (!) radio station of the Popel group for all the days of the fighting near Dubno.

A convoy of vehicles with fuel and ammunition for Popel's group was stopped on the Brody-Dubno highway. It was stopped by the commander of some retreating cavalry division who happened to be there (most likely, it was the 3rd cd from the 6th army) and sent back, since "Dubno has long been with the Germans." Nobody wanted to argue with him, the trucks turned around and hurriedly left for the rear - and at that very time, 20 shells remained in the tanks of Vasilyev's 34th TD ... You read this and think: is this a

description of the military operations of the regular army or a story about how drunk would-be tourists looked for each other in the forest? Apparently, the Yu-3

command is the most worried. f. in these days and hours caused a breakthrough of the 11th German Panzer Division (more precisely, what was left of it after the battles with the 15th, 19th, 8th mechanized corps of the Red Army) to Ostrog - Shepetovka. First

of all, Kirponos and Khrushchev obtained consent from the Headquarters to use units of Lukin's 16th Army to fend off the German breakthrough, which arrived from the Far East in the first days of the war.

district Prosku-ditch (Khmelnitsky) - Izyaslav - Shepetovka. Yes, the German invasion confused all pre-war plans, and already on June 26, 1941, the 16th Army was ordered to be transferred to the Western Front to Smolensk, but thanks to the energetic and decisive actions of Commander Lukin, the 109th Motorized Division and the 114th Tank Regiment of the 57th separate tank division were removed from loading and advanced to Ostrog. Then Lukin attached to his group the 213th "motorized" division of the 19th mechanized corps, which, as the attentive reader remembers, due to the lack of vehicles, moved on foot from Kazatin to the west, to Rovno, already occupied by the Germans. In general, Lukin's group was at least twice as large as the opposing 11th Panzer Division of the Wehrmacht. In addition, most of the front's aviation was involved in the fight against the German tanks that had

broken through to Ostrog, which (according to the report of the Air Force Commander) "during the period 28.6 - 29.6. the enemy tank group (up to a division) that had entered the Ostrog region was driven back by the actions of our bombers in cooperation with the troops of the Shepetovsky fortified area and dispersed in the forests. It threw it back and dispersed... In parentheses, it should still be mentioned that, according to German data, the irretrievable losses of the 11th TD, even by September 4, amounted to 40 tanks [11]. In addition, the command of Yu-3. f. ordered the creation of a "cut-off defensive line" along

the line Vishnevets - Bazalia - Starokonstantinov, i.e. 60-70 km south of the route of the German 11th TD. The last reserves of the front were advanced to this line: the 24th mechanized corps (222 light tanks), three artillery anti-tank brigades, etc. 199th Rifle Division. These formations stood at the indicated line without any contact with the enemy, who did not intend to turn south, but rushed straight to the east, into the deep rear of the Southwestern Front.

In addition, according to Bagramyan, the Headquarters decided (presumably, on the basis of panic reports that flew to Moscow from the headquarters of Yu-3. f.) that the front on its own "would not be able to contain the avalanche of fascist tanks" (by the start of the fighting at 11 th TD had only 143 tanks).

Already on June 29, Zhukov, in a telephone conversation with Kirponos, emphasized that "The Headquarters requires that the main attention be paid to the development of events in the Shepetovsky direction ... For this, tank units

Lukin in full strength (the 13th and 17th tank divisions, the 115th tank division of the 57th tank division, at least 900 tanks) should be thrown at Zdolbunov-Mizoch" [110].

The German command, which was hardly desperately bluffing, throwing the rather battered 11th Panzer Division into a "cavalry raid" in the rear of the Soviet troops, itself counted on **such an effect** ... Behind all this turmoil about the 8th and 15th

mechanized corps, most likely, just forgot. However, about what happened there, it's better not to recall.

On June 28, on the banks of the forest streams Radostavka and Ostruvka (not indicated on any of the geographical maps available to the author), the **fighting of the 15th MK actually ended.**

After all the confusion with the change of orders, after many days of "departure" in the forest region of Radekhov-Brody, only on the morning of June 28 did the 15th mechanized corps go on the offensive. In the Berestechko area (which was now being attacked by the mechanized corps), by this time there were no more German tanks left (13, 14, 11 tank divisions had already gone 100-120 km to the east, and the 16 tank division fought with the Popel group in the Dubno region). In fact, the 15th MK met only with German infantry from the

297th Infantry Division. Descriptions of the battle on June 28, contained in the reports of the commanders of the 15th MK, 10th and 37th tank divisions, are very lengthy and confusing [8]. **A brief**

summary looks something like this: "... during the day, units fought in the area of \u200b\u200bthe tract Volya Adamovska - Ksaveruvka for mastering Lopatin ... the advancing units of the 10th TD were detained in front of peat bogs, in the area of \u200b\u200bwhich the only road turned out to be completely unsuitable tanks...

During the battle for Lopatin at the turn of the river. Ostrovka, the advancing units were surrounded (was the tank division surrounded by enemy infantry? - M.S). By 21 o'clock, enemy infantry with anti-tank guns leaked from the Oplutsko-Kolesniki direction and, flowing around the battle formations of the units, started a forest battle with tanks ... Remaining the 10th TD in this area for the night, being surrounded, was pointless and could lead to the loss of the entire division ...

Forcing the river Styr, 6-8 tanks of the 74th tank regiment of the 37th TD were under heavy enemy artillery fire from the side of Las Denbnik and were hit. Having suffered significant losses and not having sufficient tank support (before the battle, the 37th TD had 211 tanks, including 26 T-34s. - M.S.), the motorized rifle regiment of the 37th TD was forced to suspend the offensive and go on the defensive on western bank of the river Styr ... The enemy, covering up to a battalion (infantry battalion against a tank division! - M.S.) the crossings on the western bank of the river. Styr, having suffered heavy losses, began a hasty retreat in the direction of a height of 202.0 - ur. Las Denbnik ... Due to a temporary loss of control, the 73rd Panzer Regiment managed to be transported to the western bank of the river with great difficulty. Styr... This made it possible for the remnants of the enemy battalion, which was defending the crossings at Stanislavchik, to withdraw into the forest... were instantly knocked out and caught fire.

Several tanks tried to go around the bridge on the right and left, but this proved impossible; the tanks got stuck in a swamp and were hit by enemy artillery fire...

With the onset of darkness, the commander of the 15th mechanized corps ordered the withdrawal of units of the 10th tank division to the east in the area of the 37th TD and for joint actions with it to capture Lopatin, and later, in connection with what had already happened (which means - "already accomplished"? - M.S.) exit from the battle of the 37th Panzer Division - an order to exit the battle and return to the starting position..."

It is hard to believe that all this happened on its own territory, practically - in the area of the permanent pre-war deployment of the 15th mechanized corps, i.e. where every road, path, ditch, ford, bridge had to be thoroughly studied. It is hard to believe that we have a description of the combat operations of the mechanized corps, which included pontoon-bridge, sapper, engineering, repair and evacuation, reconnaissance units.

For each tank in the 15th mechanized corps, there were (as of June 1, 1941) 45 personnel. Of these 45 people, there were at most five members of the KB crew inside the tank (in

BT - three people). The rest were supposed to ensure the combat operations of the tankers. Provide communications, reconnaissance, repairs, fuel, shells, bridges, crossings and, most importantly, control ... The report of

the commander of the 15th MK states that during the day of this "fierce" battle, the 10th TD lost seven people: 1 killed and 6 people were injured. Here one would be glad that by the end of June 1941 the Red Army had learned to fight with "little bloodshed". Alas, further in the reports such figures appear that completely discourage any desire to rejoice at anything. Thus, during

the battles of June 23-28 and the subsequent retreat beyond the Dnieper, the 10th Panzer lost 210 people killed, 587 - wounded, 3353 people were missing, "lagged behind on the march", etc. However, even in terms of the level of losses, Ogurtsov's division confirmed its reputation as one of the best. After all, 756 senior officers, 1052 junior commanders, 3445 privates went to Pryatin (beyond the Dnieper), in total - 56% of the initial (as of June 22) number. The further fate of Sergei Yakovlevich Ogurtsov himself was tragic. In the course of fierce battles near Berdichev, he was captured, in April 1942 he escaped from captivity, joined a detachment of Polish partisans and died in battle on October 28, 42 near the town of Tomaszow, 100 km from that very Lublin, to which so and his tank division did not reach ...

The 37th Panzer Division, whose entire participation in the "counterattack of the mechanized corps of the Southwestern Front" was reduced to helpless attempts to push the German infantry battalion from the crossing near the town of Stanislavchik, lost 75% of its personnel. 467 senior officers, 423 junior commanders and 1533 privates entered the concentration area near Pryatin. Simply put, during the retreat to the Dnieper, the division almost completely "melted".

Well, the 212th motorized division of the 15th MK completely disappeared. Almost without a trace. If in all the reports of the commanders of the 15th MK it is stated that the 212th MD "defended Brody", then Ryabyshev and Popel in their memoirs unanimously say that they did not find any of our troops in Brody. Already on July 1, during the beginning of the general withdrawal of units of the 15th MK, the division commander, Major General Baranov, and the chief of staff, Colonel Pershakov, disappeared in the Olejuv area. In fact, S.V. Baranov was wounded, taken prisoner and

typhus in a prisoner-of-war camp near Zamosc in February 1942. After the loss of headquarters, the 212th MD quickly and completely collapsed - only 745 people left for Piryatin by July 12 ...

The attempts of the part of the 8th MK (7th motorized division, tank and motorized rifle regiments of the 12th TD) that remained at the disposal of Ryabyshev to break through to the Popel group in Dubno also ended in complete failure.

Despite the presence of a powerful tank ram (Ryabyshev writes that, in addition to two hundred light tanks, there were 46 KB and 49 T-34s in his group of troops), it was not possible to break through the defenses of the units of the 57th and 75th German infantry divisions. The description of these two tragic days - June 27 and 28 - in Ryabyshev's memoirs is highly inaccurate. So, he writes that the Germans lost 150 tanks in two days - a figure that is clearly fantastic, given that the only 16th Wehrmacht Panzer Division operating in this area started the war, having only 146 tanks in its arsenal, and its main forces were chained by battles near Dubno.

Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the Germans had to pay huge **(by their scale** huge) losses for the defeat of the 8th MK . So, for example, on June 28, a group of German tanks broke through to the command post of Mishanin's tank division. In the ensuing battle, ten of our tanks (6 KB and 4 T-34s), as Ryabyshev writes, "managed to destroy all 40 enemy vehicles that had broken through. They themselves had no losses due to the fact that the Nazi tank guns did not penetrate the frontal armor of our heavy and medium tanks. But even steel armor could not make up for the absence

elementary order.

"The shell-shocked, barely speaking Mishanin was unable to command. But he flatly refused to go to the hospital and did not get out of the tank. Colonel Nesterov (deputy commander of the 12th TD - M.S.) fussed, shouted, gave orders, then canceled them ... The division was essentially left without a commander, "this is how Popel describes the situation, and judging by how events unfolded Further, this harsh assessment is very close to reality. On the

evening of June 28, German motorized infantry with tanks went to the rear of the 8th MK, cutting off the escape route along the highway to Brody. The panic started again. General Mishanin died, on foot raising the fighters to attack. The catastrophe was prevented by decisive actions of the commander

corps. Ryabyshev personally led a group of tanks, which broke through the "gates" in the still very loose enemy ring and held the road to Brody until all the surviving units of the 7th MD and 12th TD passed through it. The withdrawal turned into a disorderly flight, and the new commander of the 12th Panzer Division, Colonel Nesterov, even managed to overtake his subordinates. On the morning of June 29, he and his political officer Vilkov, as Bagramyan writes, "rushed to the front command post in Ternopil," where they reported to Kirponos about the defeat of the corps. On the same day, June 29, the front headquarters again ordered the withdrawal of the 15th and 8th mechanized corps to the rear, beyond the line of defense of the 37th rifle corps, but this time the order only "legitimized" the collapse that had actually begun. The situation of those days is very eloquently

evidenced by a short phrase in the report on the hostilities of the 15th MK: "... the highway east of Zolochiv is all clogged with burning cars of countless

columns..."

However, Ryabyshev claims that by July 1, the 8th MK retreated to Ternopil, having in its composition "more than 19 thousand fighters and commanders, 207 tanks, including 43 KB and 31 T-34s."

The power, as we see, was still considerable. "Acting against the advancing 1st tank group of the enemy," General Ryabyshev writes in his memoirs, "the 8th mechanized corps could continue to tie it down for several more days, inflicting losses and slowing down the advance into the depths of our territory. In this case, the remaining tanks and artillery of the corps would have been used to the end with maximum efficiency in battle" [113].

But the element of retreat has already embraced both the troops and the Yu-3 headquarters. f. On June 30, the front headquarters moved to Proskurov (Khmelnitsky), on July 3 - to Zhitomir (250 km east of Brod), on July 6 - to Brovary (this is already BEHIND the Dnieper). There was still a lot of space before Vladivostok, but further "relocations" of the headquarters of the Southwestern Front were interrupted by a threatening roar from Moscow [112, p. 199]: "Reliable information has been received that all of you, from the commander of the Southwestern Front to the members of the Military Council, are in a panic and intend to withdraw troops to the left (i.e., eastern. - M.S.) bank of the Dnieper. I warn you that if you take even one step towards the withdrawal of troops to the left bank of the Dnieper, you will not defend the fortified areas until

on the right bank of the Dnieper, then you will all suffer a cruel punishment as cowards and deserters.

Chairman of the GKO I. Stalin. In

response to this telegram, on July 12 another flew to Moscow.

telegram:

"..the enemy managed to break through to Zhytomyr and Kyiv because we did not have reserves (??? - M.S). Despite this, we did not allow the enemy to break into Kyiv from a raid ... We assure you, Comrade Stalin, that the task you have set will be accomplished. Khrushchev,

Kirponos.

Last Stand

It is hardly a coincidence that the German divisions that surrounded Dubno on all sides began their offensive only at noon on June 30 - already after parts of the 15th and 8th mechanized corps rolled back from Brod to Ternopil. Like a pack of dogs on a hunted bear, three infantry (111, 44, 75th), 16th tank and 16th motorized divisions of the Wehrmacht rushed to Popel's group. The Germans used the two-day pause given to them by the sluggishness of the Soviet command - they brought up large artillery forces, accumulated large stocks of shells.

The offensive began after a powerful two-hour artillery preparation. "Our advanced positions disappeared in smoke and dust. The clouds covered the sun... The border between the field and the forest disappeared, the road disappeared, the horizon disappeared..." [105] There was almost nothing to answer - only a few shells remained in the artillery regiment of the 34th TD. But the "bear" was still very strong. Heavy tanks KB, having shot all the ammunition, rammed German tanks, trampled enemy cannons into the Ukrainian black soil. During the battle, it was possible to capture several German howitzer batteries with a large supply of shells, which immediately fell on the head of the enemy. By the end of the day, the fighting had died down. The Germans practically did not advance a kilometer towards Dubno, suffered heavy losses, lost the commander of their 44th infantry division (he was captured and died during the bombing from a fragment of a German bomb). But the position of the Popel group also became critical: fuel and ammunition were running out, all radio stations were broken, the medical battalions were overflowing with

Late in the evening of June 30, after much deliberation, the commanders made the following decision: the rear, tankers without vehicles (who didn't even have rifles), the medical battalion, under the cover of one tank regiment, break through the encirclement at st. Willow and go south, to Ternopil. This group was headed by Colonel Pleshakov, commander of the 27th motorized rifle regiment, "an old warrior," as Popel writes about him, "who received the Order of the Red Banner near Perekop, and the Order of Lenin on the Karelian Isthmus." Several shells were placed in each of the sixty tanks of this group - the main hope was for the effect of surprise, for a swift onslaught and a tank ram. This calculation was justified. The Germans, arrogant to the point of recklessness, were asleep. Pleshakov's detachment went south almost without a fight. About a week later, on the Ternopil-Khmelnitsky highway, he caught up with units of the 8th MK retreating to the east.

The main forces of the Popel group (which by this time had been reduced to 80 tanks and several batteries of artillery) from the morning of July 1 were to advance along the Dubno-Brody highway to the southwest, to where, according to Popel's assumption, Ryabyshev was supposed to be with two divisions of the 8th mechanized corps. The lack of

communication and information once again played a fatal role in making such a decision. There were no longer any of our troops in the Brod area. It was necessary to break through not to the south, but to the north, along the Dubno-Mlynov highway, to where **the counterattack of the 5th Army was being prepared.**

Yes, that's right - in an atmosphere of general chaos and the uncontrolled withdrawal of the troops of the 6th Army and other parts of the Southwestern Front, the commander of the 5th Army, Major General M.I. Potapov was preparing a new offensive against Dubno. The 41st Panzer Division of the 22nd Mechanized Corps was to act as the main striking force. The attentive reader, I hope, still

remembers how this division in the first days of the war rushed between Vladimir-Volynsky and Kovel, how it was "taken apart piece by piece", how the division lost two thirds of its tanks during the withdrawal through the dense forests of Ukrainian Polissya. But everything comes to an end - and in the last days of June, the 41st TD and the remnants of the 215th MD came to join with the main forces of the 5th Army at the turn of the Stokhid River north of Rozhishche.

By June 29, according to Vladimirsky's monograph, the 41st TD had 106 T-26 tanks and 16 heavy KV-2 tanks (with a 152-mm cannon), another 15 T-26 light tanks were in the 215th motorized division. Everything is relative. We can say that these divisions, having lost 72% of the initial number of tanks, were already defeated before the battle. On the other hand, in terms of the number of tanks, the 41st TD and 215th MD together corresponded to one German tank division. In accordance with the decision of General Potapov, the tank group, advancing from the north-west on Mlynov-Dubno, was

supposed to strike east of Rovno on the flank and rear of the enemy's 3rd Panzer Corps, whose divisions were already pretty exhausted and bled dry by many days of fierce battles with 1 -th PTAB Moskalenko, then - with parts of the 22nd, 9th and 19th mechanized corps on the Goryn River. The idea of a counterattack promised success. But it wasn't there ... "When the troops of the left wing of the 5th Army were finishing preparations for going on the offensive," writes Vladimirsky, "a new order was received from the commander of the South-Western Front, in which the 5th Army was

tasked ... to start a retreat with the onset of darkness on July 1 and to the line of the Sluch River, withdraw by the morning of July 5 ... due to the tight deadlines for withdrawal ... offensive operations were to be completed no later than the evening of July 1" [92]. It is impossible not to note the constancy with which the command of Yu-3. f. disrupted any organized offensive actions of the troops entrusted to him. Nevertheless, on July 1, at 15:00, the offensive began. By 10-11 am on July 2, the tankers of the 41st TD, having defeated up to three

battalions of German motorized infantry, were already 15 km from Dubno. If the actions of the troops of the 5th Army had been coordinated in time and place with the breakthrough of the Popel group, then, most likely, several thousand soldiers and several dozen tanks could have been withdrawn from the encirclement. Alas, no interaction between the "northern" and "southern" groups of Soviet troops was ever established. And at the time when the 41st TD was breaking through to Dubno from the north, the tankers of the Popel group launched their last offensive on Kozin (30 km southwest of Dubno). What can we tell about this fight, if its eyewitness,

participant and leader writes:

"... individual episodes, scenes arise in the shroud of bloody fog. No matter how much I want to, I can't consistently describe this incomparable carnage that lasted all day... The lush grass around turned yellow from smoke... An unceasing roar fills the air, rolls through the forest. You can't make out where our tanks are, where the fascist ones are. There are black steel boxes all around, from which tongues of flame burst out ... "[105] The commander of the 34th

Panzer Division, Colonel I.V., was killed. Vasiliev, the political officer of the division M.M. Nemtsev and the commander of the 24th tank regiment of the 12th TD lieutenant colonel P.I. Volkov, died, went missing, thousands of fighters and commanders ended up in German captivity. Ryabyshev in his memoirs even names the exact (?) figure - 5363 missing. At sunset on July 1, survivors gathered in

the forest near the village of Kozin
- about one thousand people.

"I ordered to build personnel," recalls N.K. Popel. "People have seen enough of everything that day. They would not have been surprised if a German regiment had risen from behind the bushes to attack. But build? Why is this needed? Has the brigadier commissar lost his mind? No. Without a doubt, it was this attitude adopted by Popel - "we are part of the regular army, with its Charter, discipline, banner" - that saved people from shame and death in captivity. Attaching groups of encirclement from other units, the detachment fought 250 kilometers along the huge Dubno-Slavuta-Korosten arc and at the end of July 1941 went to the location of the 5th Army units in the Belokorovich area.

And the Germans stopped the offensive of the 41st Panzer and 215th Motorized Divisions of the 5th Army on Mlynov - but for this they had to bring into battle the reserve of the commander of Army Group South. On the morning of July 2, the 99th Infantry Division of the Wehrmacht and the motorized division of the SS "Adolf Hitler", urgently deployed through Lutsk, struck at the rear of the shock group of Soviet troops. Our divisions, drained of blood by previous battles, could not resist the onslaught of these select cutthroats, and the order of the front headquarters demanded the speedy withdrawal of units from the battle. On the evening of July 2, the 41st TD and 215th MD, together with other formations of the 5th Army, began to withdraw to the line of the Sluch River ...

And so ended this unprecedented battle, the largest battle of the first weeks of the war. Let's try now to bring the first,

the simplest, accounting and office results. In reality,
in the counterattack of the mechanized corps of the Southwestern Front, they took

participation: - June 23 at Radekhov, the 20th tank regiment of the 10th TD of the
15th MK; June 1 - 24 on the Lutsk highway near the village of Voinitsa, a group of tanks
up to a battalion from the 19th TD of the 22nd MK; - June 26,
on the northeastern approaches to Dubno, the consolidated tank group of
the 43rd TD of the 19th MK, consisting of 79 tanks; - June
26 in the direction of Brody - Berestechko of the 8th MK almost in full force
(before the battle, no more than one third of the tanks and other combat
materiel were lost); - from
June 27 to July 1 in Dubno and on the southern approaches to it, the 34th
TD of the 8th MK and the 24th tank regiment of the
12th TD of the 8th MK; - On July 1, northwest of Dubno, a tank group of the 22nd MK
up to a tank regiment.

Even a simple arithmetic summation (not taking into account the most
important fact that all these units and formations acted separately and at
different times) shows that LESS THAN ONE QUARTER of all the tank forces
of the Southwestern Front took part in the battle. With the exception of the
Popel group, not a

single formation led an offensive lasting more than one day. The offensive
of the "northern" (9th MK, 19th MK) and "southern" (15th
MK, 8th MK) groups has never been carried out under the general
leadership, in converging directions and simultaneously.

Only in the tank regiments of the Popel group, combat losses were the
main reason for the loss of materiel. In all other units and formations, from 70
to 90 percent of the tanks were lost due to the so-called "technical problems",
"lack of fuel and lubricants", "stuck in the swamps", etc. They never made it to
the battlefield.

Presumably, only after the Germans had collected and counted all the
tanks abandoned on the roadsides, they realized - WHAT threatened them ...

Part 4

RUNNING ON CLAY FEET

"Facts of Negative Moods and Phenomena"

On September 17, 1939, the troops of the Belarusian and Ukrainian fronts of the Red Army invaded Poland. So, from a treacherous attack on the country with which he was. the Non-Aggression Treaty was signed (concluded in 1932, extended in 1937 until 1945), the Soviet Union began its direct participation in

World War II. Two years later, in the summer of 1941, it seemed to many, both friends and enemies of the Soviet Union, that this war was

coming to an end for him. The task assigned to the Wehrmacht according to the Barbarossa plan ("The main forces of the Russian ground forces located in Western Russia must be destroyed in bold operations by deep, rapid advancement of tank wedges ...") was completed by mid-July 1941 The troops

of the Western and Northwestern fronts (more than 70 divisions) were crushed, defeated, and for the most part taken prisoner. The enemy occupied Lithuania, Latvia, almost all of Belarus, crossed the Western Dvina, the Berezina and the Dnieper. On July 16, the Germans occupied Smolensk. Two-thirds of the distance from the western border to Moscow has been covered. The troops of the Southwestern Front retreated in disarray beyond the line of the old Soviet-Polish border, the advanced tank units of the Wehrmacht occupied Zhitomir and Berdichev, and reached the suburbs of Kyiv. The Germans occupied (more precisely, passed) an area of 700 thousand square meters. km, which is about **three times** the territory of Poland occupied by the Wehrmacht in September 1939. Almost all the equipment and

heavy weapons of the troops of the western districts were lost. In the collection "Secrecy Removed" on page 368, astronomical figures are given for the losses of the Northwestern, Western and Southwestern fronts: by July 6-9, these three fronts lost 11.7 thousand tanks, 4 thousand aircraft,

irreparable losses were suffered by tank troops - the main striking force of the Red Army.

The numerous attempts made in the first weeks of the war to organize some kind of counteroffensive are striking in their helplessness, stupidity, and lack of will. They drowned on the banks of some not marked on any map of Radostavka, Ostrovka, Chernogostnitsa and "ditch east of Turze." Is it worth it after this to seriously discuss the possible consequences of the notorious "preemptive strike", the preparation of which has been such a heated discussion in recent years? Could such an army break into Europe, force the full-flowing Vistula, Oder and Danube? Could some tactical advantages of the "first strike" compensate for such an unwillingness of the bulk of the soldiers to fight and such an inability of the bulk of the commanders to lead, due to which the mighty mechanized corps (6th MK, 4th MK, 15th MK), armed with the best in the world tanks T-34 and KB, simply melted away, disappeared, leaving behind thousands of abandoned tanks, armored vehicles, trucks that blocked all the roads of Lithuania, Belarus and Western Ukraine.

What Soviet historians modestly called the "border battle" was in fact the complete defeat of the entire first strategic echelon of the Red Army (the number of divisions surpassed any army in Europe, and the number of tanks surpassed all of them combined). True, the German command soon had to learn that the surrounded and defeated armies of the western districts (PribOVO, ZapOVO, KOVO) were only part of the "main forces of the Russian ground forces." And in place of the broken divisions from the depths of the vast country came more and more, more and more ...

In concrete terms, this cycle of death looked like this. By the beginning of the war, the Western Front (3rd, 10th, 4th, 13th armies) consisted of 44 divisions. After almost all of them were destroyed in a huge "cauldron" between Bialystok and Minsk, the Headquarters creates in fact a new Western Front consisting of five armies: 16th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd. Following this, on July 14, the Reserve Front was deployed in the rear of the Western Front, consisting of six armies: 24th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st and 32nd. By the end of July 1941, three more armies were deployed in the western direction: the 33rd, 43rd and 49th.

In total, during the two-month battle of Smolensk in the western direction, 104 divisions and 33 brigades were put into battle. The Stavka sends another 140 divisions and 50 brigades to two other strategic directions (Leningrad and Kiev) [21]. And all this countless army was defeated, surrounded and captured in new "cauldrons" - near Smolensk and Roslavl, Uman and Kyiv, Vyazma and Bryansk. The Germans captured Kyiv, Kharkov and Odessa, blockaded Leningrad, went

to Moscow. By the end of September 1941, the Red Army had lost 15,500 tanks, 66,900 guns and mortars, and 3.8 million small arms in the course of seven major strategic operations alone. Aviation losses by the end of July reached 10,000 combat aircraft [35, p. 368]. These figures cannot even be compared with the losses of the enemy - the Wehrmacht simply did not have so many heavy weapons. On September

3, 1941, Stalin, trying to both frighten and pity Churchill, wrote to him: "Without these two types of assistance (it was about the landing of the British in France and the supply of 400 aircraft and 500 tanks to the USSR monthly. - M.S.) The Soviet Union will either be defeated, or ... will lose for a long time the ability to take active actions on the front of the struggle against Hitlerism ... "[72, p. 233]

Ten days later, Stalin did what tens of thousands of victims of the Great Terror were accused of and shot for: he called on the British imperialists to invade the country of the victorious proletariat. On September 13, he already

asked Churchill "to land 25-30 divisions in Arkhangelsk or transfer them through Iran to the southern regions of the USSR" [72, p. 239].

Shocked by this turn of events, Churchill wrote to Roosevelt: "We could not get rid of the impression that they (the Soviet leaders. — M.S.) might be thinking about a separate peace..." And how the descendant of Lord

Marlborough looked into the water! It was during these days in the autumn of 1941 that Stalin and Beria made special efforts to "build bridges" to the conclusion of a truce on the terms of the transfer of most of the occupied territories to Germany. And if Hitler had listened to the smart advice of many of his accomplices and completed

war with the Soviet Union on approximately the same conditions under which the truce with France was signed on June 24, 1940 (i.e., the reduction of the army to 10 infantry divisions, the disarmament of the French aviation and navy, the demilitarization of the economy), then the history of the Old The world would have turned out differently ...

The reader who had the patience to read up to this point must have already seen the gigantic gap between the scope and quality of the material and technical preparation of the Stalinist empire for war and the complete inability of the Red Army to effectively use these resources. The multi-million Red Army turned out to be equally incapable of either defense or offensive. And if a threefold numerical superiority was not enough even to prevent an unprecedented defeat, then what could change a fivefold superiority? Sevenfold? No, it's not about the number of cannon tanks, mortar planes. There could be more or less of them - and this would not change anything at all. Nothing but the number of trophies that the Wehrmacht got.

That is why, in search of the cause of the military catastrophe, the author proposes to interrupt the stream of numbers, dates, numbers of divisions, engine hours and kilometers, millimeters of armor and millions of tons of ammunition that he brought down on the reader's head, and start with several living pictures, "sketches from nature", made by participants in those tragic events.

Let's start from the very beginning. From a hot summer day on June 22, 1941. On this day at 4 o'clock in the morning, the commander of the 9th MK, Major General K.K. Rokossovsky received a telephone message from the headquarters of the 5th Army with an order to open the "red package". The package included an operational action plan for the corps, in accordance with which the 9th MK moved from the pre-war deployment area (Shepetovka - Novograd Volynsky) to Rivne - Lutsk. The path was not close. Only to Rivne more than 100 km. All this long saying to the fact that the episode, which will be discussed later, took place on the morning of the second day of the war in the rear, 200 km from the front.

So, the book of memoirs of Marshal Rokossovsky "Soldier's Duty": "... the

road ran through a huge array of lushly overgrown bread, reaching the height of a man. And so we began to notice

somehow in one place, then in another, in the thick of the bread, strangely dressed people began to appear alone, and sometimes in groups, who, at the sight of us, quickly disappeared. Some of them were in linen, others were in undershirts and military-style trousers or in heavily worn peasant clothes ... I ordered to catch the hiding people and find out who they were. It turned out that these were the first so-called "natives of the encirclement" ... The respondents tried in every possible way to prove that their units were broken and died, but they miraculously escaped and decided, fearing captivity, to change clothes ...

... continuing to move to the area of concentration, we repeatedly observed ... the chaotic movement of vehicles rushing singly and in groups, more reminiscent of a stampede than an organized evacuation (emphasized by the author. - M.S). Repeatedly it was necessary to send outfits to restore order and detain military personnel who, under various unreasonable pretexts, tried to get away from the front ... "

As the attentive reader will remember, Grechanichenko (see Part 2) talks about how shots were fired in response to his attempts to stop the "refugees". These are the first days of the war on the Western Front.

And how were things in Ukraine?

Let's continue reading Rokossovsky's book:

"... a general without weapons was delivered to the command post of the corps in the afternoon, in a torn tunic, exhausted and exhausted, who said that, following the instructions of the front headquarters, he saw to the west of Rovno headlong rushing east one after another cars with our fighters. The general caught the panic and decided to detain one of the vehicles. In the end, he succeeded. There were up to 20 people in the car. Instead of answering questions about where they were running and what unit they were, the general was dragged into the back and began to be interrogated in unison. Then he was declared a saboteur in disguise, his documents and weapons were taken away, and he was immediately sentenced to death. Having contrived, the general jumped out on the move and rolled

off the road into thick rye cases of shelling of people trying to detain the alarmists took place in other areas. Those fleeing from the front did so, apparently, out of fear that they would not be

returned back On June 24 (that is, already on the third! Day of the war) in the Klevan region (150 km from the border) we gathered a lot of would-be warriors, a

there were a lot of officers. Most of these people did not have weapons. To our shame, all of them, including the officers, were arguing the insignia. In one of these groups, an elderly man sitting under a pine tree, who in his appearance and demeanor did not at all resemble a soldier, caught my attention. A young nurse was sitting next to him (what pace - the third day of the war, and they already managed to rip off the buttonholes and start the PZh! - M.S). Turning to those sitting (sitting in front of the general! - MS), and there were at least a hundred of them, I ordered the officers to come up to me. Nobody moved. Raising my voice, I repeated the order a second, third time. Again, in response, silence and immobility (here it is - the "communication problem", which in war is solved not by the presence of wires and walkie-talkies, but by the desire to establish communication. - M.S). Then, going up to the elderly "encirclement", he ordered him to get up. Then he asked what rank he was. The word "colonel" he squeezed out of himself with such indifference and at the same time with such impudent defiance that his appearance and tone literally blew me away. Pulling out a pistol, I was ready to shoot him right there, on the spot. Apathy and bravado instantly subsided from

the colonel. Realizing how it could end, he fell to his knees and began to beg for mercy ... "And how could this scene end if one of the "encirclement " had a weapon in their hands? "They declared him a saboteur in disguise, they took away his documents, weapons, and immediately pronounced a death sentence ..." And Rokossovsky's name would have been on the long list of

dead Soviet generals, with a note very common in these lists: "The burial

place is unknown." Now again we take the book of memoirs of N.K. Popel "In a difficult time." Unlike the Rokossovsky mechanized corps, stationed deep in the rear of the district, the 8th MK of Lieutenant General Ryabyshev before the war was located in the Drogobych-Stryi region, just a hundred kilometers from the border. And instead of a rough farce with "circlemen in

underpants", from the very first days the war appeared before Popel's eyes in its true, tragic guise: "... German fighters with a soul-grabbing howl and machine-gun shot fly overhead. After each call - groans, screams. The fighters scatter into the bread, stretching on both sides of the

consider damaged cars. They are not in a hurry to get into the body - on the ground it is somehow more reliable. And when they finally sit down in their places, it turns out that there is no Petrov or Sidorov. Searches begin, commanders shout out names in hoarse voices. There is a traffic jam on the road, and in the meantime, planes appear again ... "

These are pictures of the evening of the first day of the war.

And here is the second day: "... today's road is different from yesterday's. And not for the better. This is the road of retreat... Among the cars with the wounded there are trucks carrying some kind of property. It is not clear whether it was private or public... Here is a lorry, the entire body

of which is occupied by a tall ebony sideboard. ... The wounded are not only in cars. They wander along the highway, leaning on sticks, supporting an injured hand with a healthy one ... There are soldiers who do not notice signs of injury. Perhaps bandages under the clothes, or maybe... I catch myself

on unkind suspicions... ... From the north, from the forest, at a gallop, jump out artillery teams without guns. The structures are cut off. Red Army soldiers on horseback. Once, a long time ago, probably in the twentieth year, I saw this. Batteries fled, cutting off traces, abandoning guns. Balykov and I jump out of the

car: - What part, from

where? The one sitting in front, without a belt, without a cap, pulls

the bridle: - And you go there, take a sip, you will know who

and where! Balykov unfastens his holster. It makes you

tone down. "Comrade Commissar, everyone was crushed by tanks.

We were left alone. Believe it or not: it has thousands of tanks (how can we not believe it? We have been writing about these "thousands of tanks" for sixty years in all books. - M.S). What can you do with a "forty-five" ... We must tick to the old border ...

... When there were 15-20 kilometers left to Yavorov, in a narrow passage between broken trucks and overturned wagons, my "emka" collided nose to nose with a staff car. It's impossible to miss. I went out to the road. Howitzers were dragging tractors behind an oncoming car (in the Wehrmacht, which was very "prepared" for war with the whole world, howitzers were dragged by six horses at that time. - M.S).

I was interested in what part, where it should be. A major with a carefully curled hussar mustache and a small, round captain jumped out of the car. They introduced themselves: regiment commander, chief of staff. — What is your task? The major hesitated: - We are

saving the equipment ... -

That is, how - are
you saving? Did you receive

such an order? - We have no order to receive from anyone - the

headquarters of the corps in Yavoriv remained, and the Nazis are already there. So we decided to save the equipment. It will come in handy at the old border ... It became clear to me: the gunners

arbitrarily abandoned their firing positions. I ordered to stop, contact the nearest headquarters of the infantry unit and turn the guns to the north. The mustachioed major was in no hurry to carry out the order. I had to threaten: - If you try to "save the materiel" again, you will go to court.

And I ask the chief of staff to come to my car, we will go to Yavorov.

There were no Germans in Yavorovo ... I handed over to the operational duty officer chubby captain-artilleryman ... "After passing two

hundred kilometers in aimless throwing, the 8th MK received the third order in two days: move away from Yavorov to the east, to Brody. This is another 130 km, and all roads to Brody lead through Lviv.

"... at eight o'clock in the morning on June 24, when the motorcycle regiment entered the usually crowded streets of Lvov, we were greeted by an unkind silence ... Occasionally single shots were heard. As the cars were drawn into the city, the shots sounded more and more often ... Oksen (chief of counterintelligence of the corps. - M.S.) drove up to me.

"I can imagine," Oksen reported, "teacher Osip Stepanovich Kushnir, caught in the attic behind a machine gun. He fired back to the last bullet... Kushnir did not want to answer my questions. He was

silent. Then he raised his head, threw back his wavy hair, looked at me point-blank and calmly said:

"If I got you, I wouldn't waste so much time on you. Order to shoot. I remembered: there is only one step from

nationalism to fascism... In front of me, a Ukrainian communist, stood a Ukrainian fascist. almond with

they didn't have to..."

Evening of the same day, June 24,

1941 "... I'm catching up with a strange procession. A lieutenant with two Red Army soldiers (all three of them have rifles on hand) are escorting a fat man with his hands up, in a tunic without a belt. The detainee languidly rearranges his legs - apparently, he has already said goodbye to life.

— Who is

that? - Spy, comrade brigade commissar, we are shooting. The

"spy" turns around: "Nikolai

Kirillich, dear... Colonel Chistyakov,

head of artillery of the corps (!!!—M.S.), rushes towards me. He was so overwhelmed that he was unable to speak. The lieutenant explains everything for him: "Without documents, without a car.

Interested in something

howitzer regiment. Buttonholes of a colonel, and a belly like a bourgeois ...

Already in my car, about ten minutes later, Colonel Chistyakov finally comes to his senses, and I will find out the details. In Lvov, Chistyakov's car was attacked - either by paratroopers, or by Bandera (well, what kind of paratroopers, Nikolai Kirillovich? There was NOT A SINGLE parachute unit of the Wehrmacht on the entire Eastern Front. - MS). The colonel had to flee. The tablet with the documents remained on the seat of the car ... "

But in fact, Colonel Chistyakov was very lucky. If he fell into the hands of special officers, he would have to answer not for the shortcomings of the figure, but for secret documents thrown in a clean field...

Of course, these are still minor individual shortcomings. Main - the battle at Dubno was ahead.

As you remember, on the evening of June 28, the 7th motorized and 12th tank divisions of the 8th MK began a disorderly retreat. And that's how it is looked in detail:

"... Ryabyshev sat on the emka and rushed to Brody. On the way, he stumbled upon fighters wandering in crowds, burning cars, wounded lying in cuvettes. No one occupied the line intended for Nesterov's division (12th division - M.S.) ...

... Some restless Red Army soldiers said that the motorized infantry rolled south, apparently to Ternopil. The commander turned onto the southern highway and about twenty kilometers overtook the tail of the stretched column. Nobody knew anything. They did not see Nesterov and Vshkov (commander and political officer of the 12th TD. - M.S.). Ryabyshev tried to stop the cars. From the cockpit of a lorry, a sleepy voice calmly said: "What other commander is there?" Our general is a traitor. Leaked to the fascists. (Pay

attention, dear reader, to this serene intonation: "sleepy voice", "calmly said", the general has flown to the Nazis, we are here in the rear draping ...) Ryabyshev pulled the cockpit handle, grabbed the speaker by the harness (ordinary fighters rode without a harness. - M.S), dragged out. - I'm your commander.

Without putting his pistol in his holster, Ryabyshev moved along the column, stopping companies, battalions, ordering them to occupy the defense with the front to

the north-west ... nervousness and uncertainty reigned at the front headquarters, where the commander was called. He reached the Military Council, never once stopped by anyone ... The headquarters was preparing for redeployment. In the hustle and bustle of the general rush, inconsistent orders were issued on the move, which were often canceled after ten minutes. In pursuit of the first communications officer, the second rushed ... The front headquarters retreated to Proskurov "(117 km east of Ternopil, 150 km from the Popel group

dying in Dubno. - M.S). In the course of all these "relocations" Ryabyshev finally found political officer of the 12th tank:

"... one evening Ryabyshev noticed a group of people. Approached. Heard Vilkov's voice. The regimental commissar spoke passionately:

"It's time to understand, comrades, that we are surrounded. Odessa is occupied by the enemy, General Kirponos is a traitor and a traitor. Hope only for ourselves...

- Where did you get such information? shouted the enraged Ryabyshev. The commanders turned

around..." According to V. Suvorov's profoundly correct remark, "for a researcher, the main thing is a fact, for a propagandist, it's intonation." The fact was that "the next day Ryabyshev got in touch with the Military Council of the front and

sent Vilkov at his disposal. That is, for a raise. Well, as for intonation, try replacing the words "enraged shouted" with "astonished asked" and re-read the resulting phrase again. By the way. The report of political officer Vilkov on the topic

"Save yourself who can" took place in a group of commanders. Remember - "the commanders turned around." And what? This time not a single pistol was drawn from its holster. But for such appeals they are shot. Everywhere. Even in the most complacent countries, there is only one punishment for inflammatory, alarmist agitation in a war zone - execution. But, it seems, the orders of the Red Army were distinguished in those days by

supernatural liberality. Nothing terrible happened to the second deserter either: "... many years have passed, but even now, remembering Nesterov, I invariably see him

smugly sitting in the commander's chair or cowardly hanging around in the rear ... For many years I have not heard anything about Nesterov, and he wasn't interested. Only two years ago, on a hot July day, I met him on Khreshchatyk. A round belly protruded from an ironed tunic, in the hands of a large yellow briefcase ... "[105] Good. Suppose the commanders are a little confused. Or they shot all the cartridges for the "TT", raising their fighters to attack. There was

not enough bullet for Vilkov and Nesterov. But where are the "organs"? Where is the glorious, ever vigilant VChK-GPU-NKVD? Already in this department there was always an abundance of

cartridges. After all, how many thousands, millions of people they rolled up under Art. 58-10, for "anti-Soviet agitation"! Once, in the city of Ivanovo, they exposed pests who were producing fabric at a local weaving factory, in the drawing of which "with the help of a magnifying glass one could see the Nazi swastika and the Japanese helmet." How could they fail to see the deserter Vilkov or Nesterov with a belly?

The answer is extremely simple - sweat poured into their eyes. summer, heat, run hard...

"July 11, 1941

Top secret

To the head of the Main Directorate of Political Propaganda of the Red Army, army commissar of the 1st rank, comrade

MEKHLIS ... It should be noted that a number of workers of party and Soviet organizations left the districts to their fate, fleeing along with the population, sowing panic. The Secretary of the RK CP(b)U and the Chairman of the RKK of the Khmelnytsky region on

8.7 left the region and fled. On July 5, the district leaders of the Yanushpol region also fled in panic. On July 7, the secretary of the Ulanovsky RK CP (b) U, the chairman of the RIK, the prosecutor, the head of the police shamefully fled the area. The State Bank will be left to fend for itself. Valuables, money transfers, parcels, etc. remained in the regional communications department. In this area, the police

department left about 100 rifles unguarded ... "This is one of the many reports that the head of the Political Propaganda Department of the Southwestern Front, Brigadier Commissar Mikhailov methodically sent to Moscow.

"July 6, 1941.

Top secret ... in some

areas, the party and Soviet organizations are showing exceptional confusion and panic. Some district leaders left with their families long before the districts were evacuated. The leading workers of the Grodno, Novograd-Volynsky,

Korostensky, Garnopolsky districts fled in a panic long before the departure of our units, and instead of taking out state material values, they took out personal belongings using the transport at their disposal. In the Korostensky district, the archives of the district committee of the Communist Party (b) and various files of regional organizations were left in unclosed rooms "(a ficus in a tub there, it's like someone from the locals stole it ... - M.S).

"July 12, 1941

Top secret ... cases of

panic, cowardice, disorganization and desertion have not yet been eliminated. These shameful phenomena are taking place in a number of parts of the front. The mass of fighters and commanders in groups and singly, with

armed and unarmed continue to move along the roads to the rear and sow panic. Thus, the

commander of the 330th heavy artillery regiment of the RGK and the battalion commissar, during a German air raid on Dubno and an imaginary movement of enemy tanks, ordered to abandon the materiel, property and move out of the city. Already on the way, the commanders offered to return and pick up materiel and ammunition. Before reaching 1.5 km to the abandoned property, the regiment commander mistook the bursts of our anti-aircraft artillery shells for paratroopers (and to this day, all Soviet military-historical literature is full of German paratroopers who cut, cut and cut our wires. - M.S.) and ordered to return back ... "

"July 14, 1941 Top

secret ... there are facts

of negative moods and phenomena. Individual commanders commit unauthorized executions. So, the state security sergeant shot 3 Red Army soldiers, whom he suspected of espionage. In fact, these Red Army soldiers were looking for their unit. The sergeant himself is a coward, he sat in the rear and was the first to take off his insignia. The lieutenant of the 45th Infantry Division acted like a bandit. He arbitrarily shot 2 Red

Army soldiers who were looking for their unit, and one woman who asked for food with her children. Both criminals have been tried by the Military Tribunal..." [68] Dear reader! If, after reading these documents, a bad thought about some "Ukrainian specificity" (Bandera, separatists,

"Westernizers") stirred in your head, then immediately drive it (this thought) away. No specifics. Everything is like everyone else.

Already on the second day of the war, the command of the Western Front (Belarus) and the headquarters of the armies subordinate to it exchanged reports of the following content:

"... a huge mass of vehicles is busy evacuating the families of command personnel, who are also accompanied by Red Army soldiers, the wounded from the battlefield are not evacuated ...

... the whole road from Vilnius to Molodechno is clogged with departing units of infantry, artillery and tanks ...

... poorly controlled units, frightened by attacks from low strafing enemy aircraft, retreat in disarray ... corps commanders show instability, prematurely withdraw units and especially headquarters ... a lot of different units and individual fighters

have accumulated along the Pinsk highway, who have broken away from their units and retreat to the east..., the commander of the motorcycle regiment, located in the area of the city of Antopol, is not able to detain the departing and asks to send a special group of commanders with representatives of the special department and the prosecutor's office..." [40, 79]

Gomel is not Ukraine at all, and not even Western Belarus.
And the picture is the same.

"June 29, 1941

The Bureau of

the Gomel Regional Committee is informing you of some facts that have taken place since the beginning of hostilities and are continuing at the present time in a strictly

secret manner. 1. The demoralizing behavior of a very significant number of commanders: the departure of commanders from the front under the pretext of escorting evacuated families, group flight from units has a corrupting effect on the population and sows panic in the rear. On June 27, a group of collective farmers from the Kornalissky village council detained and disarmed a group of about 200 military men who had left the airfield and were heading for Gomel. Collective farmers caught the Sokolov - and what happened to the combat aircraft? Presumably, they were also among those "destroyed at dawn on June 22 by a sudden attack by German aircraft." - M.S.) Collective farmers of the Uvarovich district disarmed several small groups and individuals. .." [114] On the same day, June 29, 1941, the secretary

of the district party committee from
the Belarusian town of Luninets reported by telephone to Moscow:

"... now from Drogichin to Luninets and further east to Zhitkovichi (respectively, 100-200-260 km east of the border Brest. - M.S.), individual units are resisting the enemy, and not some kind of organized army ... Place

the stay of the commander of the 4th Army is still unknown, no one directs the alignment of forces ... the Germans can freely come to Luninets, which can create a bag for the entire Pinsk direction ... The mobilization carried out in our area did not give any effect. People wander without a purpose, there are no weapons and outfits to send people. **The** city is full of commanders and Red Army soldiers from Brest and Kobrin, who do not know what to do, and are constantly advancing in cars (not all, which means that the gasoline burned out in the warehouses "bombed by the Germans." - M.S.) to the east without any command. ..

In Pinsk, in a panic, they themselves blew up artillery warehouses and oil depots and announced that the Germans had blown them up with bombs (remember, reader, Boldin's memoirs? - MS), and the head of the garrison and the regional party committee fled to us in Luninets ... These facts undermine the trust of the population. We are shown some inexplicable laxity" [114].

Yelnya is another 500 km east of Pinsk, and this is real Great Russia. What did members of the Yelnya defense headquarters report to the Central Committee of the

All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks on June 30? "... We consider it urgently necessary to bring to the attention of the Politburo of the Central Committee that the success of the Germans ... in many ways, if not in everything, was facilitated by the panic that prevailed in the command top of

individual military units, and the panic inactivity in local bodies. One has only to fly over the area at night to an unknown aircraft (and under the existing order, all flying aircraft at night are unknown to them), as they raise a panic about the landing of the enemy, yell for help (without these cries about the numerous German airborne assault forces, we have not a single book on the history of the beginning of the

war did not come out. - M.S.) From June 26 to 27, they fought all night with an imaginary landing force. And when we arrived with our combat squad from among the communists and Komsomol members, we found that they shot at no one knows who and as a result

mortally wounded two soldiers ... Since June 22, we have not received any instructions about our activities ... Neither Smolensky's secretary oblast committee, nor the chairman of the oblast executive committee have given a single instruction or advice and do not even respond to telephone

inquiries ... Almost the only directive that we received on June 27 is dated the 23rd of this

The regional executive committee demands information about the state of churches

and prayer buildings ... Even a narrow circle of senior officials does not have at least approximate information about the situation on nearby fronts ... plus, you see that they are fleeing from Smolensk, and the regional authorities are silent (German 29th the motorized division entered Smolensk only 16 days after this letter was written. - M.S), and it becomes difficult to navigate and distinguish truth from provocation ... if further every leading Soviet party worker begins to evacuate his family, then there will be no one to defend the Motherland " [112]. Yelnya, after all, was still quite far

from the front line, and in this city in those days not yet "every leading Soviet party worker was involved in the evacuation of his family." But Vitebsk at the beginning of July already became a front-line city. On July 5, 1941, the military prosecutor of the Vitebsk garrison, military officer of the 3rd rank, Comrade Glinka, compiled an extensive report on the situation in the city:

"... Anxious mood, panic, riots, stupid and unnecessary evacuation are increasing every day and hour. This situation was created as a result of incorrect actions of the regional authorities and the regional committee, and in other cases - the inaction of these bodies and the regional committee (here the prosecutor almost verbatim repeats the report of the comrades from Yelnya. - M.S.) ... The regional executive committee dissolved its departments. Most of the workers left with their families. District councils also do not work and do not impose any order in the city. Now in Vitebsk there is not a single institution that would work. Everything closed and self-liquidated, including the regional court, the people's courts, the regional prosecutor's office, the regional health department, trade unions, etc. ...

alarm and panic were intensified by the fact that the city became aware that the responsible workers of the regional organization were evacuating their families from property, having received on the railway stations, independent carriages, and the wives of these response workers from the NKVD, the regional executive committee, party bodies and others began to leave work without permission ... So, for example, they left the telegraph, the telephone network (!!! - M.S), from hospitals and other institutions ...

... On July 3, 4, 5, crowds of women stood near the regional military registration and enlistment office for permits and exit passes, and when they were denied passes, they stated why the communists left, their wives with children and property ... among separate groups of workers , possibly backward, harmful moods and unworthy cries began to appear that the communists, the administration, etc., were fleeing.

It must be admitted that in the report of the Vitebsk prosecutor there were so many "bad moods and unworthy cries" that this report was carefully hidden in archival dust and was not shown to anyone - right up to 1992 "... the

formation of new parts is going badly. Every day and hourly scattered units march on Vitebsk in groups of 5-10 people and alone, both with and without weapons. What is being done with these people and where they are going, no one can give a sensible explanation ...

The regional committee of the party today ... adopted a resolution and announced on the radio that a workers' division was being organized, and called on the workers to join it. This should have been done 5 days ago, and not now, when the workers are not at the enterprises, but at home without work ... Today, the city committee of the Komsomol suggested that the Komsomol go to the city committee and district committees, at a time when most of the Komsomol left the city without anyone's permission...

... the prison was liquidated. The police work is weak, and the NKVD is also curtailing its work. Everyone thinks how to evacuate themselves, not paying attention to the work of their institution ...

...the chairman of the Vitebsk City Council, Azarenka, loaded a barrel of beer into a truck prepared by him in order to get drunk on the road, as he usually does in the city in his service..." [68]

Man without a gun

Yes, yes, yes, dear readers, I can perfectly hear your indignant voices: "And he wants to dig up all sorts of rubbish! What an addiction to collecting all sorts of abominations! Why does the author see only one negative? Where is the heroic defense of the Brest Fortress, where is the feat of 28 Panfilov heroes ... "

I understand your indignation. I was also born in the USSR. But I'm in no hurry to apologize. Let me remind you once again what this book is about - we are trying to figure out the reasons why the huge, armed to the teeth, vastly outnumbered by its opponent, the Workers 'and Peasants' Red Army was defeated, routed and thrown back hundreds of kilometers from the western borders of the Soviet Union. And now, having finished with all the "living pictures", we will try to move from the particular to the general, from subjective opinions and eyewitness memories to dry (but no less impressive) figures. Let's start with the simplest. From the quantitative accounting of inanimate objects.

I send the readers most indignant at the author's vile hints to the 368th page of the statistical collection "Secret Classification Removed", compiled (I will remind this again) by employees of the General Staff of the Russian Army under the general supervision of the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Colonel General G.F. Krivosheev. After working on this page with a calculator, they learn that during the three months of the war, from

June 22 to September 26, our troops lost 1,934,700 small arms of all types in the southern theater alone, i.e. rifles, machine guns, machine guns and revolvers. In total, in 1941, the Red Army lost **6,290,000** small arms [35, p. 367]. On the same page 367 anyone can read that on all fronts in the six months of 1941 40,600 guns of all types and 60,500

mortars were lost. Well, these losses are still somehow explainable. A gun is a heavy thing. Even the lightest (76-mm sample of 1927) weighed nearly a ton. And if the command entrusted you with a 152-mm cannon of the 1935 model, weighing 17 tons? How to get her out of the encirclement if the tractor broke down or was left in the chaos of retreat without fuel? And how to move this monster through the first stream? Wade - get stuck, across the bridge - but it still needs to be found, and not every bridge can withstand 17 tons. Soviet historians explained the loss of 20.5 **thousand tanks** and 17.9 **thousand combat** aircraft long

ago and simply: old, unreliable,

weakly armored "coffins", worked on explosive gasoline ... What else is there to argue about?

But here is the most common "small arms" of 1941 - the three-line Mosin rifle. This weapon is an unsurpassed example of reliability and durability. The "three-ruler" could be drowned in a swamp, buried in sand, dropped into salty sea water - and she kept shooting and shooting. The weight of this

true masterpiece of engineering is 3.5 kg without cartridges. This means that any young and healthy man (namely, these were the Red Army in the summer of 1941) could carry 3-4 rifles from the battlefield without much effort. And even the most seedy collective farm mare, harnessed to a simple peasant cart, could take a hundred "three-rulers" left over from the dead and wounded soldiers to the rear. And further. Rifles "just like

that" are not handed out. Each has its own individual number, each is issued personally and against signature. Everyone, even the "youngest" first year, was explained that he would go to court for the loss of his personal weapon.

So how could SIX MILLION rifles and machine guns go missing? Let's not

simplify. In war as in war. It is not always possible to collect all the rifles on the battlefield to the last. Not every truck and not every wagon with weapons in a combat situation reach their destination. Finally, a certain number of rifles and machine guns could actually be damaged by fire, explosion, polar cold. Is it possible to roughly estimate the size of such

"normal" losses of small arms? Of course you can. We open the same book "Secret

stamp removed" on page 352, we read. In four months of 1945, 1,040,000 infantry units were lost

weapons. The average for four months in 1944 - 937,000

units. Does this mean that during the six months of 1941, the "normal" for the Red Army combat losses of small arms should have been expressed in the figure of about one and a half million units? No, this is a wrong, hasty conclusion. In 1944-1945. number

the active army was twice as large as in 1941 (6.4 million versus 3.0 million, see p. 153 of the same collection). More people, more weapons, more and loss of weapons. It would be more correct to think something like this: in 1944, one million soldiers "lost" 36,000 small arms per month, therefore, in six months of 1941, "normal" losses should not have exceeded 650-700 thousand units. And lost - 6.3 million.

So, there is an "excessive" loss in 1941 of more than 5.5 **million** small arms. Remember, dear reader, this is the number. We will meet again soon. And now we will try to evaluate the "excessive losses" in other types of weapons. Hitler's "blitzkrieg" is mainly a tank war. The main means

of anti-tank defense of that time was anti-tank guns. As of June 22, 1941, there were 14,900 of them in the Red Army (in fact, even more, since the compilers of the collection "Secrecy Removed" for some reason did not take into account the 76-mm and 88-mm guns that were in service with the PTABs).

In the six months of 1941, industry transferred another 2,500 anti-tank guns to the troops. In

total - a total resource of 17,400 units, of which **70% (12,100 guns)** were lost. And

for the whole of 1943 - for all 12 months - 5500 anti-tank guns were lost, which amounted to only 14.6% of the total resource. As an example for comparison, 1943 was not chosen by chance. This is the year of grandiose tank battles on the Kursk Bulge, this is the year when the Germans began mass production of heavy tanks "tiger" and "panther", against which our "forty-five" (namely, they still accounted for 95% of the total resource of 1943) were completely helpless.

And yet, in 1943, the Red Army was losing 460 guns a month, and in 1941, at a time when two of the three German tanks on the Eastern Front were light vehicles with bulletproof armor, 2,000 a month. 4.5 times more. But this is also a completely wrong calculation. There was no "uniform" loss of two

thousand guns every month. There was a massive "loss" of most of everything

anti-tank weapons in the first weeks of the war - and bottles with a combustible mixture, with which the defenders of Leningrad and Moscow threw themselves under enemy tanks ...

Even more "expressive" are the proportions of field artillery losses.

In 1943, 5,700 guns

were lost (9.7% of the resource), and in six months of 1941 - 24,400 (56% of the total resource). The conditional "average monthly" losses in 1941 were 8.5 times greater than in the year 1943. So - all these guns

(mortars, machine guns, tanks, rifles, planes) were lost in battle or were they abandoned by the soldiers and commanders of the Red Army who fled in all directions? On July 17, 1941, the head of

the Political Propaganda Department Yu-3, already known to us. f. Mikhailov reported: "... in parts of the front there

were many cases of panic flight from the battlefield of individual servicemen, groups, units. Panic was often transferred by self-seekers and cowards to other units, disorienting higher headquarters about the actual state of affairs at the front, about the combat and numerical strength, and about their losses.

The number of deserters is exceptionally high. In the 6th Rifle Corps alone, during the first 10 days of the war, deserters were detained and 5,000 people returned to the front ...

According to incomplete data, during the period of the war, detachments detained about 54,000 people who lost their units and lagged behind them, including 1,300

command personnel ... "[68] This is according to "incomplete data", and these are only those who managed to delay the general collapse of the Southwestern Front. The number of uncaptured deserters can be judged by the fact that, according to the statistics collection "Secret stamp removed", the loss

of Yu-3. f. from June 22 to

July 6 were: - 65,755 wounded and sick; -

165,452 killed and missing. With the help of the letter "and", the compilers of the collection cleverly hid deserters in the total number of irretrievable losses, but, taking into account the ratio of wounded and killed, which is very stable for all armed conflicts of the 20th century, as

3:1, it can be assumed that about 140 thousand people (ten divisions !) went on the r

were taken prisoner. And this is only on one front and only in the first two weeks of

the war. Those who were found and returned to service in one way or another made up only a part (as will be shown below - a small part) of the total number of "deserters". The quotation marks are not random. The situation that developed in the Red Army in the summer of 1941 was such that the use of generally accepted terms to describe it becomes extremely difficult.

The "typical scheme" of the defeat and disappearance of the military unit of the Red Army (as can be seen from many memoirs, books,

documents) was as follows. Point one. A heart-rending cry is heard: "Surrounded!" In the summer of 1941, this unpretentious word worked wonders. Front-

line writer V. Astafiev recalls: "... but one single, rare, almost never used in civilian life, fatal word ruled countless herds of people running, wandering, crawling somewhere without any orders and rules ..." Point two. Loss

of a commander. The reasons could be very different: he died, was wounded, went to clarify the situation to a higher headquarters, shot himself, just ran away.

Point three. Some of the "experienced", who took command of the decapitated military unit, decides to break through to the east in "small groups". All. This is the end. After a few days (or hours), the former battalion (regiment, division) crumbles into dust and ashes.

Point four. A huge number of lonely "wanderers", having wandered uselessly, without meaning and without food through the fields and forests, go out to the villages, to the people. And in the village - the Germans. Further options are already very few: a compassionate widow, a prisoner of

war camp, service in the "police". That's all. What word can we call these people? Deserters, traitors to the motherland, missing, surrendered, captured? I do not know, decide for yourself, dear reader. But one "hint" needs to be made: if the order "disperse and leave the encirclement in small groups" existed, if it was once written by someone with an ink pencil on a scrap

wrapping paper, then "desertion" is out of the question. Orders in the army are supposed to be followed. But who can find this piece of paper today? Far from

pretending to replace the "competent authorities" and give personal assessments, we will try to at least roughly assess the scale of the phenomenon itself. We open all the same

statistical collection. In total, during the war, **376,000** servicemen were convicted for desertion [35, p. 140]. Another **940 thousand** people were "called for the second time" [35, p. 338]. This strange term denotes those soldiers and commanders of the Red Army who, for various reasons, "lost" their military unit and remained in the territory occupied by the Germans, and in 1943-44. were re-armed. Moreover, among them were found not only collective farm men in soldier's windings, but also two generals: the head of artillery of the 24th army, Moshenin, and the commander of the 189th division, Chichkanov [VIZH, 1992, No. 12]. At the same time, one should not forget that the initial number of "lost" was much higher - far from everyone was able to survive these two or three years of poverty, hunger, shelling, executions, raids and bombings ... On

page 140 of the collection removed" the total number of all categories of retired personnel: killed, dead, missing, prisoners, convicted and sent to the Gulag (and not to the penal battalion, which is part of the army), demobilized due to injury and illness, and "others" - does not converge with indicated on the previous page by the total number of "who left the Armed Forces for various reasons" by 2,343,000 people. The authors of the collection directly explain this inconsistency by "a significant number of unidentified deserters." In addition, the number of

deserters should also include a huge number of people who evaded mobilization in the first days and weeks of the war. Until very recently, such a formulation would have been perceived as malicious slander. It was only in 1992 that the staff of the General Staff - the authors of the collection "1941 - Lessons and Conclusions" - for the first time named such amazing figures:

"In total, 5,631,600 people from the mobilization resources of the Soviet Union were left on the territory temporarily occupied by the enemy ... in the Baltic OVO, these losses amounted to 810,844, in

ZAPOVO - 889 112, in KO-VO - 1 625 174 and in Odessa VO - 813 412 people ... "[3, p. 114]

Of course, not every one of these 5.6 million cases of non-appearance of persons liable for military service at the recruiting station should be considered as deliberate draft evasion. Quite often, the recruiting office itself disappeared before the conscripts could arrive. But it is not worth exaggerating the importance of the rapid advance of the Wehrmacht, and even more so - declaring this the main reason for the multimillion-dollar losses of the draft contingent.

Geography with arithmetic in this matter is extremely simple. The Western Special Military District occupied the territory of the whole of Belarus and the Smolensk

region of the RSFSR. The Germans occupied most of this territory only towards the end July 1941

Kiev OVO is the whole Right-bank Ukraine and part of the left bank within the Kyiv region. And the Germans appeared

beyond the Dnieper only in September. Odessa Military District is not only Odessa region, but also Mykolaiv, Kherson, Dnepropetrovsk, Zaporozhye regions of Ukraine, Moldova and Crimea. The occupation of these vast expanses of the Black Sea and Sea of \u200b\u200bAzov was completed only in the late autumn of 1941, but even this time was not enough for the collection of recruits, for which, according to all plans, a few days were allotted. So, in the Voroshilovgrad region, by October 16, 1941, only 10% of the mobilized came to the Artemovsky recruiting station, and 18% to Klimovsky. As of October 23, 1941, only 43% of the total number of those called up arrived in the Kharkov Military District. Often at that time there were cases of flight of mobilized during their transportation to the part of the army in the field. According to the military registration and enlistment offices of the Kharkov and Stalin regions, at the end of October 1941, the percentage of deserters from among the recruits was about 30% for the Chuguev district military enlistment office, 35% for Stalin, and 45% for Izyumsky ...

So many and so many more

There is no war without losses, without dead, without wounded. And no prisoners. No one has yet managed to organize combat operations in such a way that not a single soldier, not a single unit was in a helpless state, surrounded, without weapons and ammunition.

So in the Wehrmacht, despite all the German organization and love for order, in the first three years of World War II (until September 1, 1942), the total number of missing and captured reached 69 thousand people. On average, two thousand people every month. This is according to German, probably underestimated, credentials.

According to the Soviet General Staff, during the first year of the war (until July 1, 1942), the Red Army captured 17,285 enemy soldiers and officers. The following year (until July 1, 1943) 534,000 people were taken prisoner. True, most of these prisoners were from the German allied armies surrounded on the Don and at Stalingrad (in total, 765 thousand Hungarians, Romanians and Italians fell into Soviet captivity during the war). In

the summer of 1944, during the grandiose and brilliantly conducted offensive operation of the Soviet troops in Belarus (Operation Bagration), the German Army Group Center was almost completely defeated. About 80 thousand Wehrmacht soldiers were then in Soviet captivity.

Everything is relative. What happened in the summer and autumn of 1941 with the Red Army goes beyond all the usual ideas. The history of wars has not yet known this. Losses by

prisoners and missing persons in 1941 amounted to '(as a percentage of the "average monthly payroll number of personnel") [35, p. 234-244]: on the North-

Western Front - 55%; on the

Western Front - 159% (this is not a typo, the fronts constantly received replenishment, so the total losses can be more than 100% of the average monthly number); on the

Southwestern Front - 128%; on the Southern Front - 49%.

When assessing the relatively "modest" figures of the Southern Front, one should not forget that the technical equipment of the Romanian army simply did not allow it to carry out large-scale operations to encircle and encircle the enemy

According to the compilers of the collection "Secrecy Removed", prisoners accounted for about 89% of the total number of prisoners and missing [35, p. 338]. Thus, it was the mass capture that was the main reason for the huge losses of the Red Army at the beginning of the war.

In particular, on the main strategic direction of the war, on the Western Front, the number of missing persons and prisoners of war exceeded the number of those killed in 1941 by more than SEVEN TIMES [35, p. 236].

In particular, during the 32 days of its existence in the summer of 1941, the Central Front lost: 9,199

soldiers and commanders killed; missing and captured - 45,824; and another 55,985 people go under the column "non-combat losses" [35, p. 243]. In other words, "non-

combat losses" and losses by prisoners were ELEVEN TIMES higher than the number of those who died in battle with the enemy. Is this the army? Is this a war? The Great Patriotic War? In general, on this

column - "non-combat losses" - it is worth dwelling more carefully. With the help of their favorite letter "and", the compilers of the collection united "those who died from diseases and those

who died as a result of accidents". But these are two big differences. However, deciphering this puzzle is not so difficult.

On the same page 146, in the same table 69, the total number of servicemen who fell ill is also given. There were 66,169 of them in the entire Red Army in the second half of 1941. Alas, not every disease ends in recovery. It is known that 7.5% of the wounded and sick who were admitted to hospitals during the war years died [35, p. 136]. We probably won't make too much of a mistake if we transfer the same proportions to the sick ones alone. In this case, it can be assumed that 5-6 thousand patients (out of a total of 66,169) were not cured by doctors. But in the column "those who died from diseases and died as a result of accidents"

there are not five, but 235 thousand! So what are these "incidents" such that the number of deaths in them turned out to be greater than the number of Wehrmacht soldiers killed and missing on the Eastern Front?

The above monstrous figures are most likely significantly underestimated. The reality was even worse and more shameful. The fact is that, according to the collection "Secrecy Removed", the total number of missing and captured on all fronts allegedly amounted to only 2335 thousand people [35, p. 146], while German sources estimate the number of prisoners captured by the Wehrmacht in 1941 at 3600-3800 thousand people.

Military propaganda of the enemy? Who knows, the Germans were very careful and reserved in this matter. So, speaking on December 11, 1941 in the Reichstag, Hitler stated that the Red Army had lost 21,000 tanks, 17,000 aircraft, 33,000 guns and 3,806,865 prisoners of war [115]. As you can see, the figures for the loss of military equipment as a whole do not exceed the official data of modern Russian military history, and the loss of guns is even underestimated! A similar figure - 3.6 million prisoners who survived as of the end of February 1942 - is also mentioned in the correspondence between Keitel and Rosenberg, which was secret and was by no means intended for propaganda purposes

[74]. In six months of 1941, sixty-three generals were taken prisoner. And in total during the war - 79 generals (we did not include Generals A.B. Shister, M.O. Petrov, F.D. Rubtsov, I.A. Laskin, F.A. Semenovskiy, who were in captivity for only a few hours or days). Of course, captivity captivity strife. The

author does not at all call for smearing everyone with the same tar. Many generals (Lukin, Karbyshev, Tkachenko, Shepetov, Antyufeyev, Lyubovtsev, Melnikov and others, about twenty people in total) were captured by the enemy, wounded, in a helpless state.

Many of those who were captured subsequently rejected all attempts by the enemy to persuade them to cooperate and were shot or tortured by the Nazis. So generals Alaverdov, Ershakov, Karbyshev, Makarov, Nikitin, Novikov, Presnyakov, Romanov, Sotenskiy, Starostin, Tkachenko, Thor, Shepetov perished. Generals Alekseev, Ogurtsov, Sysoev, Tsirulnikov escaped from captivity, crossed the front line or joined partisan detachments [20, 124].

All this is true. Another part of the bitter truth is that most of the captured generals clearly forgot that their personal

weapons were issued to them not only in order to raise their subordinates to attack. Today's humanists, who call to enter into "the plight of defenseless generals," should remember that every commander who surrendered to the enemy thereby killed thousands of his soldiers, gave hundreds of thousands of civilians to the fascists to be torn to pieces. And the measure of responsibility for the defeat of the army and the ruin of the country for a mobilized collective farm peasant and a general showered with all the blessings of life (whom the state has endowed with the right to dispose of the life and death of thousands of such peasants) should probably

be different. By the end of July 1941, the flow of prisoners of war exceeded the Wehrmacht's ability to protect and

maintain them. On July 25, 1941, the order of the Quartermaster General No. 11/4590 was issued, in accordance with which the mass release of prisoners of a number of nationalities (Ukrainians, Belarusians, Balts) began. During the validity of this order, i.e. until November 13, 1941, 318,770 former Red Army soldiers were sent home (mainly Ukrainians - 277,761 people) [35, p. 334]. And the Soviet

leadership found it necessary to somehow respond to such an unheard-of behavior of their subjects. In all units and divisions, the famous Headquarters Order No. 270 of August 16, 1941 was read out. Are there any comments needed on the question of the morale of the Red Army, if orders of the following content were issued in it:

"... commanders and political workers who, during the battle, tear off their insignia and desert to the rear or surrender to the enemy, are considered malicious deserters, whose families are subject to arrest ...

... if part of the Red Army soldiers, instead of organizing a rebuff to the enemy, prefer to surrender to him as a prisoner - destroy them by all means, both ground and air, and deprive the families of Red Army soldiers who have surrendered of state benefits and assistance ... "[VIZH, 1988, No. 9].

Alas, even with such measures, it was not possible to awaken the "love of the Soviet people for war" praised at the time by Voroshilov. The Red Army soldiers continued to drop their weapons and dispersed in crowds through the forests. Not even a month had passed since the issuance of Order No. 270, as on September 12 Directive No. 001919 of the Stavka on

barrage detachments, numbering at least one company per rifle regiment. The first lines of this Directive said verbatim the following: "The experience of fighting German

fascism has shown that in our rifle divisions there are quite a few panicked and directly hostile elements who, at the first pressure from the enemy, drop their weapons, start shouting: "We are surrounded" and carry away behind the rest of the fighters. As a result, the division takes to flight, abandons its materiel, and then, alone, begins to leave the forest. Similar phenomena take place on all fronts..." (emphasized by me. — M.S.) [5, p. 180] By the time this directive was issued, there were already one and a half million fighters and

commanders of the Red Army in German captivity. At least, such a figure appears in the correspondence between Keitel and Canaris. Moreover, it is worth noting that Canaris writes about one and a half million "capable prisoners of war", i.e. precisely those who surrendered, and not those captured after a severe wound.

Moreover, in the very first weeks of the war, the Germans were faced with a mass of defectors who were in a hurry to leave the location of their unit and surrender to German captivity even before the battle. For their maintenance, the Wehrmacht even had to create several

special camps. True, the report of the Commission for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Political Repression states that the number of defectors in the Red Army was very small: "in the first year of the war, no more than 1.4-1.5% of the total number of prisoners of war" [74]. Yes, in percentage terms, it's almost nothing. But in absolute terms - at least 40 thousand people. It is simply impossible to compare this with the number of German defectors - the number of defectors in the Wehrmacht during the first three years of the war was expressed in the double-digit number

29. The very sound of the word "defector" can conjure up in the reader's imagination the image of a man running across the field and screaming heart-rendingly: "Nicht schießen, Stalin kaput !" It happened,

of course, and so. And it happened quite differently. For example, on August 22, 1941, Major I. Kononov, a member of the Bolshevik Party since 1929, a holder of the Order of the Red Banner, a graduate of the Frunze Academy, went to the Germans. He left with most of the soldiers of his 436th Infantry Regiment (155th Rifle Division, 13th Army, Bryansk Front), with a battle flag and

together with the commissar (!) of the regiment D. Panchenko. By September 1941, the "102nd Cossack division" of the Wehrmacht, formed from prisoners of war under the command of Kononov, consisted of 1799 people [74, 119]. Dozens of pilots flew to the Germans along with combat aircraft. Later, a "Russian" air unit of the Luftwaffe under the command of Colonel Maltsev was formed from them and the pilots who were in the camps. Among them were two Heroes of the Soviet Union: fighter Captain Bychkov and attack aircraft Senior Lieutenant Antilevsky. Yes, and Maltsev himself was already presented for awarding the Order of Lenin, but fell under the "wheel" of mass repressions in 1938 [120]. For voluntary surrender and

cooperation with the invaders after the war, twenty-three former generals of the Red Army were shot or hanged (this is not counting those who received a full-fledged camp term for betrayal). Among them were commanders of a very high rank:

- Head of the Operations Department of the headquarters of the North-Western

- Front Trukhin; - Commander of the 2nd Shock

- Army Vlasov; - Chief of Staff of the 19th Army

- Malyshkin; - Member of the Military Council of

- the 32nd Army Zhilenkov; - Commander of the 4th Rifle

- Corps (3rd Army) Yegorov; - Commander of the 21st Rifle Corps

(Western

Front) Zakutny. Yes, ten people from among the executed generals were posthumously rehabilitated in the late 50s. But at the same time, one should not forget that the rehabilitation of the 50s was carried out according to the same rules as the repressions of the 30s. List, without any objective examination, on the direct instructions of the

"directive bodies" ... In early October 1941, the panic that seized the high command of the Red Army reached the point that G.K. Zhukov (at that time the commander of the Leningrad Front) sends code number 4976 to the troops with the following content:

"...explain to all personnel that all the families of those who surrendered to the enemy will be shot and upon returning from captivity they (surrendered. - M.S.) will also be shot..." [117, p. 429]

Thank God, things did not come to this, but the shooting at our own did not stop for a day. In less than four months of the war alone (from June 22 to October 10, 1941), 10,201 servicemen were shot by military tribunals and the Special Departments of the NKVD. And in total, over 994,000 Soviet servicemen were convicted by military tribunals alone during the war years, of which 157,593 people were shot [118, p. 139]. TEN DIVISIONS shot!

Everything is relative. The German historian Fritz Hahn, on the basis of memorandums that the Wehrmacht command submitted to Hitler, cites the following figures [60]. During the three years of the war (from September 1, 1939 to September 1, 1942), 2,271 military personnel, including 11 officers, were sentenced to death in the multi-million Wehrmacht. 2 people per day. And in the Red Army in 1941 - 92 people a day. In just four years of

the war (from September 1, 1939 to September 1, 1944), 7,810 soldiers and officers were shot in the Wehrmacht. Twenty times less than in the Red Army.

And deserters were found in the ranks of the Wehrmacht. Müller Hillebrand claims that 722 people deserted in all the German Armed Forces (army, air force, navy) during the last four months of the war (from January to May 1945) [11, p. 712]. And in previous years, the number of deserters in the Wehrmacht was even measured in double digits.

No, these are not just different numbers, different quantities. This is a different quality of society and power. It is also worth noting that the mass surrender of Red Army soldiers to German captivity by no means ended in 1941-1942. It follows from the report of the Commission for the Rehabilitation of Victims of Political Repression that even in **1944**, during the general offensive of the Red Army on all fronts, 203,000 fighters and commanders were taken prisoner [74.

With. 154]. Now let's sum up some arithmetic result. Without pretending to the absolute accuracy of these figures (the very nature of such phenomena as desertion and captivity excludes the possibility of accurate, by name accounting), we will try to estimate the total number of

prisoners and deserters in 1941. We open the collection "Secrecy Removed" and on page 152 we read that the average monthly strength of the active a

1941 not only did not increase, but even slightly decreased (2,818,500 against 3,334,400). The only possible explanation for such dynamics is that the number of recruits was less than the size of the losses. We will try to evaluate both of these components.

What human resources did the Red Army receive in the second half of 1941? In

total, by the end of 1941, 14 million people were mobilized [3, p. 109]. Of course, not all of them ended up in the army. The active army is only one of the constituent parts of the Armed Forces. There are also logistics, training, testing services, there are warehouses and training grounds, military builders and military doctors ... Thus, by the beginning of the war, 4,901,852 people were serving in the Red Army and Navy. Another 768 thousand people were called up before the war for "training camps in the troops." Total - 5.67 million. But of these, only 3.3 million people (58% of the total) were in the active fronts on June 22. Subsequently, the average monthly number of the Armed Forces of the Soviet Union grew to 11.4 million people (July 1945), but the share of the personnel of the active army remained the same - 6.5 million, or 57% of the total number of military personnel [35, p. 138, 152].

Proceeding from such proportions (57-58%), one can reasonably assume that of the total number of those called up for mobilization in 1941, only 8 million people entered the active army. And this is the minimum estimate. It is hard to believe that 6 million mobilized in 1941 were strengthening the defense in the rear at a time when "bespectacled" professors unfit for combat were enrolled in the Moscow militia divisions. In addition, in the summer of 1941, the active fronts included the armies of the second strategic echelon, then the troops of the internal districts previously considered rear, and at the end of the year, units of the Far Eastern Front. Thus, this (extremely important for all further calculation)

figure - 8 million people who joined the active army in 1941 - is not only not overestimated by us, but most likely underestimated. And this means that the army in 1941 lost at least 8.5 million people! (8,000,000 + 3,334,400 - 2,818,500)

And now - the most important thing: what are the components of this nightmarish figure? The

most reliable (according to the author) are the data on the number of wounded admitted to hospitals for treatment. In the rear, there was more order, and accounting was at least double (both on admission and on discharge). So, all the sanitary losses of the active army (wounded and sick) were determined by the authors of the collection "Secrecy Removed" at 1,314 thousand people. Based on the constant ratio of the wounded and killed as 3:1 for all wars of the 20th century, it can be assumed that more than 400 thousand people died on the battlefield. In fact, more precisely, according to the reports of the headquarters of units and

formations of the army, the number of those killed and died from wounds in hospitals amounted to 567 thousand people [35, p. 146]. Another 235 thousand people died as a result of some strange "accidents" and died of diseases. Even if we assume the worst - not a single wounded man of 1941 returned to duty - and on this (obviously

absurd) basis add ALL sanitary losses (1,314 thousand) to the number of those killed and dead, then it turns out that the combat losses of 1941 g. (i.e. killed, wounded, died of disease) amount to no more than 2.1 million people.

The conclusion is that at least 6.4 million people "departed" from the active army without a trace. As

much as it was in the active army on June 22, 1941, and so much again.

The result obtained by us is inaccurate and, most likely, underestimated. The whole calculation is based on the very shaky assumption that only 57% of the 1941 conscripts entered the active army before the end of that year. In addition, a significant part of the 1.3 million wounded returned to duty by the end of the year, which also increases the total number of "missing". Nevertheless, our estimate (6.4 million) does not

contradict the figures that were mentioned above:

- 3.8 million people were taken prisoner by the Germans; - **1.0-1.5** million deserters evaded both the front and captivity.

The difference (6.4-3.8-1.5), that is, a million people, is, no matter how terrible it is to write this, the wounded, abandoned during a stampede, and

unaccounted for in reports from the front killed.

And what is strange - the Soviet "historians" never considered this one of the reasons (even the most insignificant reason) of what they called the "temporary failures of the Red Army."

Here is a bad oil filter on tank diesel engines - this is an important reason for the defeat, they write a lot about it, and on the AM-35 engine the candles had to be changed after three sorties - and mountains of paper were written about this, and in the embrasures of the pillboxes of the Kiev UR there were machine-gun shutters of an outdated model .

All of these are important topics for discussion. And the fact that MILLIONS of soldiers of the Red Army dispersed to no one knows where is trifles, this is from a different shelf, this has nothing to do with the history of the war ...

burden of choice

The fanatical stubbornness with which the chains of Red Army soldiers marched waist-deep in snow to the murderous fire of Finnish machine guns shocked the imagination of Western military specialists. To this day they write books about the "mysterious Slavic soul", about the "fatalism" characteristic of the Russian peasant, and other wisdom. It is not surprising. The well-fed does not understand the hungry. In February 1940, a Red

Army soldier on the Karelian Isthmus (like every person at all times) had a choice. It was possible, under the shout and mat of the political instructor, to go on the attack. Most likely to be killed. A notice will be sent to

his native village that he died a heroic death in battles with the White Finns. The widow will be given at least some allowance. The son of the deceased, God willing, will be allowed to leave the collective farm for the city, where he will enter the FZU, he will become a man. And if you're lucky? If they do not kill, but only wound? If the orderlies pick you up before you freeze in the snow? Then they'll give you a medal, and you'll be allowed to shoemaker like a war invalid. Everything is better than laboring for "sticks" on a collective

farm. You can send the political instructor to hell and run away into the forest. Here it is the forest - nearby. Then everything becomes very easy. How the war will end - no need to guess. After the war, everyone who surrendered to the Finns will be found and shot. Or they will rot in the camp. Anyone who hid in the forest will also be found and shot. You can't spend your whole life in the forest.

This is not Singapore and Okinawa. The climate is different. And no one will hide you from the N

won't. They will find and spank. And it's even reluctant to even think about what will happen to the family of the "traitor and enemy of the people". This is the simple alternative. How can the people of the West understand it ... In the summer of

1941, an unprecedented thing happened. Before the Soviet man, the opportunity opened up to choose his own destiny without fear of the "native party" and its glorious "armed detachment".

He is gone, the NKVD, and the door to the district committee of the party is wide open, and the plaster head of the beloved leader is lying on the porch. And the Germans are all stick and stick, in the summary they already write about the "Vyazma direction".

Here it is clear even to a fool what "direction" will be next. Knowledgeable people say that the "mustachioed" has already fled from Moscow, his double is sitting in the Kremlin, waiting for the Germans. And where are we, ordinary peasants, to go? The silent majority (and in our country it was

especially silent after 1937) decided this question in the way shown in the previous chapters. There were no rallies, no "soldier committees". Silently they threw down the rifle, silently crawled out of the hateful steel box of the tank, tore off the buttonholes and attached themselves to the huge column of prisoners, which, accompanied by a dozen German escorts, wandered to the west. It is a pity that the great proletarian poet did not live to see these days, did not see how his metaphor "where a drop

pouring with mass ... "

But. There were - and more and more of them every month - those who were not satisfied with the passive expectation of the denouement. Both at the front and in the German rear, there were those who hurried to the service of the new "owners".

A very significant form of cooperation with the invaders was the participation of former Soviet citizens in the military propaganda of the enemy. Under the control of the Nazis, several hundred newspapers were published, and radio broadcasts were broadcast in Russian, Ukrainian and other languages. Some local newspapers (for example, the Oryol "Rech" and the Pskov "For the Motherland") were distributed throughout the occupied territory of the RSFSR [159]. Initially, this "press" developed two main themes: it kindled wild, animal hatred for the Jews and talked about the bright future that would come after the victory of the "valiant German army." Soon all this was supplanted by the main idea: about

the need for voluntary hard labor to thank the fascist invaders for the "liberation". By the way, about work. It is

impossible to ignore the fact that the work of railways in the occupied territories was provided by 615 thousand people (as of January 1, 1943), of which 511 thousand were former Soviet citizens... [151, p. 100] In the very first months

of the war in all the occupied regions of the USSR, all kinds of "order services", "defense teams", "security teams", colloquially called "policemen", begin to be created. Not only the names were different, but also the way of formation and the order of subordination of these forces.

Initially, many of these units were created (especially in rural areas) by the peasants themselves as self-defense units that protected the inhabitants from bands of armed deserters that flooded the forests. Stalin's instructions to turn the entire territory occupied by the Germans into a scorched desert greatly contributed to the growth in the number of "policemen". The legendary patriarch of Soviet saboteurs, a participant in four wars, Colonel I. Starinov, in an article written in 2000, said: "It turned out that we ourselves pushed the local residents to the Germans ... after this slogan, the Germans formed a police force of about 900 thousand people" [151, p. 267]. This figure - 900 thousand

people - is most likely many times overestimated. She, presumably, simply reflects the personal impressions of the practice of guerrilla warfare that "policemen were at every turn." According to modern Russian researchers, the number of "policemen" in the occupied regions of the RSFSR was significantly smaller - about 70-80 thousand by the end of 1942 [154, 155, 157]. As the front moved further and

further to the east, the occupying authorities brought all these unauthorized armed formations to the "common denominator" they needed. A single uniform for the "policemen" did not appear, but the armbands became numbered and with the seal of the German commandant's office, the permit for the right to carry weapons had to be renewed, as a rule, every month. Along with the most numerous "local police", police battalions of 500 were created.

-600 people, whose duty was to carry out large-scale punitive actions. The command staff in them was mostly German. When the "volunteers" were not enough to fight the ever-increasing partisan movement, the "policemen" began to be recruited by force. The "import" of punishers from other regions has

become very common. Thus, in the first months of the war, 22 police battalions were created in Lithuania with a population of three million. 26 police battalions with a total of 10 thousand people were created in little Estonia. In Latvia, by the summer of 1944, the total number of all kinds of police, security, border units amounted to more than 50 thousand people. Most of these forces operated outside the Baltic states - mainly in Belarus, in Poland, in the Leningrad region, where they "became famous" for their absolutely incredible, even by the standards of that crazy time, atrocity in carrying out punitive actions in partisan areas. In the summer-autumn of 1944, consolidation began, the reduction of all local "security" units into large military formations. In Estonia, the 20th SS Division and a certain 300th Special Purpose Division were formed. Two (15th and 19th) SS divisions were formed in Latvia. The number of accomplices of the occupiers in impoverished Belarus was relatively

smaller, but even there the situation was strikingly different from the idea of the "partisan region" set by Soviet propaganda literature. By the autumn of 1941, the number of "Belarusian self-defense corps" exceeded 20 thousand people. In April 1944, the formation of 39 battalions of the so-called "Belarusian regional defense" began, which, according to the plan of its creators, was to become not a police force, but a full-fledged military unit capable, together with Wehrmacht units, of stopping the advance of the Red Army. Finally, in the late autumn of 1944, the 30th SS division was created from the remnants of all sorts of Belarusian collaborationist formations. It is worth noting the following fact: from the report of NKVD General Kobulov it follows that from September 1944 to March 1945, about 100 thousand "deserters and accomplices of the invaders" were arrested in Belarus [129, 154, 155, 157]. Another region in which an overabundance of accomplices of the

invaders made it possible to export units of punishers to neighboring

territory became Ukraine. By the summer of 1942, 70 police battalions with a total of 35 thousand people were formed there. In addition, more than 150,000 people were members of local security units of the so-called "Ukrainian national self-defense." It is worth emphasizing that here we are

talking about the "policemen" subordinate to the German authorities, and not about the armed formations of Ukrainian nationalists [155, 157]. Along with the organization (or "taming") of security, police forces, the

Germans already in the autumn of 1941 moved on to the systematic formation of "national" units of the Wehrmacht, staffed by former Soviet citizens (if only the word "citizen" is generally applicable to subjects of the Stalinist empire). So, a total of about 90 "eastern" battalions were created: 26 "Turkestan", 13 "Azerbaijani", 9 "Crimean Tatar", 7 "Volga-Ural", etc. True, the Germans used these "Ostbattalions" always separately, apparently fearing to concentrate many "foreigners" on one sector of the front. The exception to this rule was the 162nd Turkic Infantry Division, which, according to German documents, "was as good as a regular Wehrmacht division." True, half of the "Turks" in this division were Germans from the countries of Eastern Europe ("Volksdeutsche"), and it fought in Italy [119]. In April 1943, the formation of the Ukrainian

division of the SS troops "Galicia".

Until July 2, 1943, 53,000 volunteers arrived at the recruiting stations, of which only 27,000 were recognized as fit for service in the SS, and 19,000 people were actually enlisted in the emerging division. The first meeting with the regular Red Army took place in July 1944 in the battle of Brody, where "Galicia" was almost completely defeated. The remnants of the division were withdrawn to Slovakia, understaffed to full strength, after which the Ukrainian SS men participated in the suppression of the Slovak national uprising, as well as in battles against the Yugoslav partisans [155].

The Cossack troops were very numerous. Hitler declared the Cossacks the descendants of "racially close" Goths (and not Slavs) and in April 1942 officially assigned them the status of "military allies"

Germany". In September 1942, a "Cossack circle" was held in Novocherkassk and the "headquarters of the Don Cossacks" was formed. At the same time, the formation of the "Don", "Kuban", "Terek" regiments began.

In addition, more than ten "Cossack regiments" were formed in Ukraine from among prisoners of war who were or called themselves Cossacks. As a result, by the spring of 1943, more than 20 Cossack regiments with a total number of about 30 thousand people fought in the Wehrmacht. In addition to enough formations, reconnaissance and sabotage Cossack hundreds were created. So, in May 1942, in the 17th field army of the Wehrmacht, an order was issued to create one Cossack hundred at each army corps and another two hundred at the army headquarters. In June of the same 1942, after the encirclement and defeat of the Soviet troops near Kharkov, in the offensive zone of the 40th tank corps of the Wehrmacht, such a number of prisoners accumulated that in order to escort them, on the orders of the corps commander, General Schweppenburg, from among the same prisoners was urgently formed and armed with a Cossack division of 340 people. Its own Cossack hundred appeared in September 1942 even as part of the 8th Italian Army, which was later defeated near Stalingrad. In the spring of 1943, after more frequent cases of desertion and the

transition of entire units of the Cossack units to the side of the partisans, most of the Cossack formations were withdrawn to Poland, where in July 1943 the "1st Cossack Cavalry Division of the Wehrmacht" was created on their basis. True, it was commanded by German Colonel von Pannwitz, and every fourth "Cossack" in this 18,000th division was German. The division went to Yugoslavia to fight against Tito's partisans. Finally, in February 1945, the deployment of the 15th SS Cossack Corps, numbering 25 thousand people, began. The "all-Cossack circle" convened on the initiative of Kononov elected Pannwitz a "marching ataman" and decided to transfer the corps to the stillborn "army" of General Vlasov ... [119, 155] The "Russian" formations were very numerous (as one would expect). Already in March 1942, in the village of Osintorf (between

Orsha and Smolensk), the formation of the so-called "Russian People's National Army" began (although in terms of its size, this "army" did not reach the standard rifle division). Initially, the commanders in the RNNA were officers from

"White emigration", then, in September 1942, the Germans appointed Colonel of the Red Army V.I. Boyarsky - the former chief of staff of the 31st Rifle Corps (this is the same corps that in June 1941 was supposed to strengthen the defense of the 5th Army in the Lutsk direction, which we repeatedly mentioned in Part 3). The brigade commissar (!), a former member of the Military Council of the 32nd Army, Zhilenkov, became the head of the "organizational and propaganda department" of the RNNA. In November 1942, after numerous cases of RNNA fighters going over to the partisans, this "army" was dressed in German uniforms and reorganized into the 700th

Wehrmacht "volunteer" regiment [119]. All in the same March 1942, in a prisoner of war camp near Suwalki (Poland), under the leadership of the "curators" from the SD, a "national party of the Russian people" was created, later renamed the "fighting union of Russian nationalists." Under this "party", under the command of the former lieutenant colonel of the Red Army, the former chief of staff of the 229th rifle division V. Gil (who took the pseudonym "Rodionov"), the military unit "Druzhina", numbering 500 people, was formed. Gil's head of counterintelligence was former Major General of the Red Army P. Bogdanov. In May 1943, the "Druzhina", whose number, according to various sources, ranged from 3 to 7 thousand people, was reorganized into the "1st Russian National SS Brigade". The Germans supplied the newly-minted "SS" with French cognac, chocolate, Brazilian coffee. Abundant grub "brigade" practiced punitive operations in the partisan regions of Belarus. Meanwhile, the front of the war rolled to the west, and Gil decided to change owners once again. Having received a promise of a full amnesty from the NKVD agents, on August 16, 1943, the "vigilantes" killed German officers, loaded onto a plane and sent General Bogdanov and other, especially zealous, accomplices of the invaders to Moscow. The SS brigade was renamed the "1st Anti-Fascist Partisan Brigade", which subsequently actively and successfully fought against the Germans in the Polotsk-Lepel partisan zone. Some authors claim that Gil was received in Moscow by Stalin himself, who personally presented him with the Order of the Red Star [154, 155, 158].

The most notable, truly unique phenomenon in the history of mass cooperation with the invaders was the "Republic of Lokot" and its "Russian People's Liberation Army" (RONA). Lokot is a small

village, lost in the forests 80 km south of Bryansk. In early October 1941, one of the most successful operations of the Wehrmacht took place in these places - the throw of Guderian's tank army from the "Kyiv bag" through Orel to Mtsensk and Tula. Overtaking the rapidly advancing German tank divisions, the party, military, enkavedes and all other authorities were rapidly fleeing from Orel and Bryansk. For a few days - before the approach of the infantry units of the Wehrmacht, lagging behind by 150-200 km from the tankers of Guderian - complete anarchy reigned over the vast territory of the two regions. Crowds of marauders robbed shops, incomprehensible armed men in overcoats with ripped shoulder straps took away food from the peasants, old disputes were quickly, simply and mercilessly resolved, the most far-sighted began to compile lists of Jewish neighbors ... In a word, everything was like everywhere else. In this

situation, two engineers (both from the Red Army volunteers of 1918, both "nominees" of the 20s and repressed "pests" of the 30s), B. Kaminsky and K. Voskoboinik, created a "people's militia" in Lokta, the number of which by October 16, it had grown to 200 men armed with Soviet rifles. And there was nothing unique in this yet - such self-defense units were spontaneously created in many villages and towns. A key role in the further development of events was played by the commander of the 2nd field army of the Wehrmacht (at the end of December 1941, who replaced Guderian as commander of the 2nd tank army), Colonel-General R. Schmidt. Contrary to the directives of the big Berlin authorities about the inadmissibility of flirting with "Slavic subhumans", Schmidt wisely reasoned that he, by and large, did not care who, under what banner and in what form would ensure peace and protection of the rear communications of his army from Soviet partisans.

Omitting for lack of time the description of the very process of formation of the "Lokot Republic", let's go straight to the result. By the summer of 1942, the "Lokot district of self-government" included 8 districts of the Bryansk and Oryol regions with a population of 600 thousand (according to

other sources - up to 1 million) people. A little less than sovereign Estonia. German troops (with the exception of communication groups and reconnaissance units) were withdrawn from the territory of the district. Elbow acquired all the signs of the state. It had its own government, its own ruling party ("People's Socialist Party of Russia"), its own "state bank", its own "beloved leader" - Chief Burgomaster Kaminsky, its own hero who died on January 8, 1941 in a battle with partisans Voskoboinik (his name the Drama Theater was named, and Lokot itself was renamed "Voskoboinik"). Taxes were regularly levied (generally much lower than in other occupied territories), the financial system (with old Soviet banknotes) worked under the control of the "Planning and Economic Department". A multi-level judicial system and its own district prison were created, in which the duties of an executioner were performed by a certain "Tonka the machine gunner", who shot the convicts from the Maxim machine gun. It is also impossible to pass over in silence such a phenomenal episode as the public execution on the city square of Loktya of two German (!) servicemen convicted of murder and robbery. There were 9 hospitals and 37 rural medical posts in the district, 345 schools operated, orphanages for orphans and a nursing home were opened in Dmitrovsk. At first, only the portraits of Hitler and the rabid anti-Semitic propaganda in the district newspaper Golos Narodu somewhat disturbed the blissful picture of the life of this "free land". Alas, there was no place for a "no man's land" on the

field of the grandiose battle between the two totalitarian dictatorships. From the very first days of its existence, this "peasant republic without Soviets and communists" became the object of the wild fury of the NKVD, which controlled the partisan detachments of the Bryansk region. Attacks on the villages of the district, and on Lokot itself, followed one after another. To fight the partisans, the "people's militia" was transformed into a "Russian liberation people's army" of many thousands. In the spring of 1943, RONA consisted of five rifle regiments, an anti-aircraft and armored battalion, armed with tanks abandoned during the retreat of the Red Army, including 2 heavy KB and four T-34s. To staff the "army" Kaminsky already in the fall of 1942 moved from the recruitment of volunteers to forced

mobilization. For a year and a half, a real civil war was going on on the territory of the "Lokotsky district", with all its terrible signs: the absence of a front and rear, constant transitions "from white to red" and vice versa, and most importantly, monstrous mass atrocities on both sides. Not only the Lokot newspaper "Voice of the People", but also the secret reports of the command of the rear guard troops of the German Army Group "Center" record numerous facts of the destruction of entire villages by partisans along with their inhabitants. With no less sadism, the fighters of the "Kaminsky army", which was rapidly turning into a particularly large criminal gang, dealt with the captured partisans. At the end of August 1943, the victory at the Kursk

Bulge and the offensive of the Red Army drew a line under the history of the "independent republic". The army of Kaminsky - with their families, looted junk, livestock - loaded into the echelons filed by the Germans and left for Belarus, in the Lepel region. In the new place, all the games of some kind of "independent third force" quickly ceased. The Kaminsky brigade, whose number was reduced to 5 thousand people, fought for many months against the partisans, including with the aforementioned "1st anti-fascist brigade". It was in the battles with the Kamenites that Gil-Rodionov himself was killed. It is noteworthy that as soon as the Kamenians realized that there was nothing to take in the Belarusian villages tormented by years of terror, they began to racketeer their predecessors - local policemen - extorting the stolen gold from them by torture ...

For his diligence, Kaminsky was awarded an audience with Himmler and promoted to the rank of SS Brigadeführer. What was previously called the "Russian Liberation People's Army" was simply and without fuss reorganized into the 29th SS division. The last rung on the ladder of shame and crime was the participation of the Kamians in the massacre of the inhabitants of the insurgent Warsaw. Even acting "shoulder to shoulder" with such selective scum as the SS brigade of Dirlewanger recruited from criminals (at one time he "wound his sentence" for raping a minor), and punitive Cossack hundreds, the 29th SS division was able to "distinguish itself" so much that the generals Wehrmacht forced Hitler to recall the division from the front and shoot Kaminsky together with his chief of staff Shavykin [151, 155, 158].

The most insane (of the known to the author) stories of Russian collaborationism is associated with the name of the outstanding adventurer of the 20th

century, Ivan Bessonov. Born on August 24, 1904. The son of a worker from Perm. Education - four classes of the city school. Laborer. At the age of sixteen, he volunteered for the Red Army. Then - Chekist, Pomnachtab of the 13th Cavalry Regiment of the OGPU. In the early 1930s, he participated in the creation of the Xinjiang Uighur Republic in northwestern China. After the failure of the Xinjiang adventure - in the troops of the NKVD of the Leningrad District. Graduated from the Military Academy. Frunze. Surviving during the mass extermination of the Leningrad "Chekists", Bessonov, at the age of 35, becomes the head of the Combat Training Department of the NKVD Border Troops. Then something happens, in April 1941, brigade commander Bessonov leaves the "authorities" and meets the war in the modest position of chief of staff of the 102nd Infantry Division (21st Army) of the Red Army. In early August 1941, during fierce fighting in the Rogachev-Zhlobin area, the division

was surrounded, and Bessonov himself voluntarily surrendered. What happened next is closely connected with the events of the same "lost war" that we talked about in part 1. After the Finnish troops reached Petrozavodsk and the Svir River, the huge "islands" of the Gulag in the area of the Northern Dvina and Pechora rivers turned out to be in the reach of German transport aircraft. . The former Chekist was the first to appreciate the opening prospects and offered the Germans a fantastic plan. An airborne brigade of 6,000 men formed from Soviet prisoners of war landed from Luftwaffe planes in the camps, destroyed the guards and armed the convicts. Further, according to Bessonov's plan, the process was to go like a snowball and end with the capture of the entire Ural industrial region by the forces of a huge rebel army. At the same time, Bessonov wrote a program manifesto "What is to be done?" and undertook the creation of a political organization with a stunning name: "Russian People's Party of Realists." From the Germans, the "realist" Bessonov demanded guarantees of non-interference in the actions of his organization, and after the victory - the recognition of Russia within the borders of 1939.

It was not difficult to recruit people with good parachute training among the millions of prisoners. Revolts in the Gulag happened even without "help from heaven". So, at the beginning of 1942, in one of the camps on Pechora (that is, exactly where Bessonov planned to land), the prisoners rebelled, disarmed the guards and put up stubborn armed resistance to the arriving NKVD troops. It is difficult to say how the attempt to implement Bessonov's plan could have ended, but at the last moment the Germans were overwhelmed. The prospect of the emergence of an absolutely uncontrolled rebel army did not suit the leadership of the SS. In June 1943, Bessonov was arrested and sent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, the brigade was urgently disbanded. In May 1945, despite repeated warnings from the Americans who released him, I. Bessonov voluntarily returned to the USSR. The meeting with the Motherland ended for him with execution on April 19, 1950. The answer to the question of who he was - a traitor, a hero, a victim of the war - the brigade commander Bessonov took with him to the grave. Even about whether Bessonov was posthumously rehabilitated, there are directly opposite reports in the literature... Old

Man von Pannwitz at the head of the Cossack corps did not inspire much confidence in the Germans. Cases of desertion, going over to the side of the enemy, and even ordinary criminal showdowns were a constant and widespread thing in the so-called "national units". Accordingly, a much more reliable, "calm" and, as a result, the most massive way to use former Soviet people was to enroll them in the regular units of the Wehrmacht as the so-called "voluntary assistants" (Hilfswillige, or abbreviated "Hee-vi"). In the first months of the war, there was no shortage of volunteers. One of the "second wave" anti-communist emigrants, a certain P. Ilyinsky, who met the beginning of the war in the Polotsk region, recalls: "Everyone was waiting with full readiness for the mobilization of the male population into the army (the Bolsheviks did not have time to fully mobilize); hundreds of applications for the admission of volunteers were sent to the Ortskomendatura, which did not even have time to properly look around on the spot ... "[158].

Initially, the "Khivi" served as drivers, storekeepers, orderlies, sappers, loaders, thus releasing "full-fledged Aryans" for direct participation in hostilities. Then, as the losses of the Wehrmacht grew, the Russian "volunteers" began to arm. In April 1942, the German army had 200 **thousand**, and in July 1943 - 600 **thousand** "Khivi". There were especially many of them in those units and formations of the Wehrmacht that passed through Ukraine and the Cossack regions of the Don and Kuban. So, in the 6th army of Paulus surrounded at Stalingrad in November 1942 there were 51,800 "Khivi", and in the 71st, 76th and 297th infantry divisions of this army "Russians" (as they called all former Soviet) accounted for up to 40% of the personnel! In the summer of 1942, there were 47,000 "volunteers" in Manstein's 11th Army. Since October 1943, "Khivi" were included in the standard staff of the German infantry division in the amount of 2 thousand per division, which was 15% of the total number of personnel [74, 119, 153, 155].

In the end, the scale of this unparalleled cooperation with the invaders both in the history of Russia and in the history of the Second World War became so great that the Wehrmacht high command created a special post of "Inspector General of the Eastern Troops." In February 1943, under the command of General Kestring, about 750 thousand people served in the ranks of the Wehrmacht, SS and air defense. This figure is called by foreign historians. Modern military historians from the Russian General Staff fully agree with them: by mid-July 1944, the composition of the military formations of "voluntary assistants", police and auxiliary formations **exceeded 800 thousand people**. Only in the SS troops during the war served more than 150 thousand former citizens of the USSR..." [35, p. 385] All the above figures are "... number personal very far from being accurate. In the bloody whirlpool of war, there was no time for statistics. In addition, all these "ostlegions" and "liberation armies" were constantly reorganized, the personnel flowed from one formation to another, so that an accurate calculation of their numbers is hardly possible. And yet the monstrous figure of 800,000 traitors is not greatly exaggerated. So, only from among the prisoners of war who were in German camps in 1942-1944. was released (mainly in

connection with joining the "volunteer formations") about 500 thousand people [35, p. 334]. But the prisoners were an important, but by no means the only source of human resources. At the service of the Germans were hundreds of thousands of deserters, and millions of conscripts who evaded mobilization at the beginning of the war. Another indicator of the scale of mass cooperation with the fascist invaders is the fact that in August 1945, 145,000 people who served in the "police" and "Khivi" were sentenced to deportation to a "special settlement" [118, p. 146]. One hundred and forty-five thousand were arrested - and how many went west with the Germans, how many were destroyed in

battles, how many were shot in the heat of the moment ... For five decades, Soviet historians have been lamenting that "history has given us little time to prepare for war." Alas, it was exactly the opposite. The ill-fated "history" of the Stalinist regime wasted much, unacceptably much time. Two decades of ferocious destruction of all norms of morality and law, of all ideas of honor and dignity, have unfortunately produced their poisonous fruits. Not a single country that fell victim to Hitler's aggression experienced such moral decay, such mass desertion, such mass cooperation with the occupiers, as the Soviet Union revealed to the world. And this is after all the cries of "indestructible unity" and boundless love for the "native party". After the endless arrests of all suspicious, all who might be suspicious, their distant relatives and neighbors. To this day, the incorrigible whip-lovers, with tears of tenderness in their eyes, recall "what order was in the country under Stalin" ...

It is impossible to ignore the fact that in recent years, in the domestic military history literature, a "strange" standard for discussing this topic has developed, to put it mildly. Either they try to squeeze a tear of compassion out of the reader by talking about how difficult living conditions forced people to serve as executioners, or they try to present fascist accomplices as "ideological fighters" for the liberation of Russia (Ukraine, Lithuania). The "ideas" that

inspired these "fighters" are clearly and unequivocally spoken of by their deeds. The main type of combat operations in which all these "battalions" and "legions" specialized were punitive raids on partisan areas, brutal reprisals against

civilians, robberies, torture and executions. They rarely participated in battles with regular units of the Red Army. So, the "dashing Cossacks" von Pannwitz committed atrocities in Russia, France, Yugoslavia, and only on December 26, 1944, they first entered into battle with the Soviet troops. The SS division "Galicia", having fought in Western Ukraine for a week, went to terrorize the brothers of the Slavs in Slovakia and Yugoslavia. The punitive battalions of the Lithuanian "fighters for independence" burned the Polish and Belarusian villages. The world-famous village of Khatyn was burned along with the inhabitants by the 118th "Ukrainian" police battalion. The quotation marks at the word "Ukrainian" are here not a tribute to the notorious political correctness, but simply an expression of the fact that the fanatics and geeks assembled in these "battalions" cannot be ranked among any people of the Earth. The chief of staff of the 118th battalion, a certain Vasyura, during the trial (in December 1986) gave the following characteristics to his former subordinates: "It was a gang of bandits, for whom the main thing was to rob and get drunk. Take the platoon commander Meleshko - a career Soviet officer and uniformed sadist, literally went crazy from the smell of blood. The cook Myshak was eager for all operations in order to rob and rob, the translator Lukovich tortured people during interrogations, raped women ... All of them were scoundrels of scoundrels ... "

A noteworthy detail: in August 1944, most of the personnel of the 118th battalion, transferred by that time to France, went to the partisans. In August 1944, a few days (or hours) before the liberation of France! Having noted in this way in the resistance movement, some of the punishers returned to the USSR, the rest signed up for the Foreign Legion and went to fight in Algeria. A suitable place for "fighters for the Vilnius of Ukraine"...

Of course, among the million collaborators there were very different people. There were also those who, in the first days of the war, thought that some kind of "liberation" might come with Hitler. Many prisoners of war enrolled in the "ostlegions" in the hope of getting weapons and going to the partisans. There were (as mentioned many times above) and cases of mass uprisings. So, on February 23, 1943, in the Vitebsk region, the 825th "Tatar" battalion passed to the partisans in full force, with weapons in their hands. Many years later, in 1956, one of

organizers of the uprising - the Tatar poet Musa Jalil was posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. On September 13, 1943, one of the "Turkic" legions rebelled near Oboyan (Ukraine). Three thousand soldiers of "Galicia" went to the partisans of the Bandera rebel army ... In a word - in a civil war as in a civil war.

People's avengers and "friends of the people"

Having written these words - "civil war" - we must also remember the other side, the other participants in the armed confrontation. Alas, it is extremely difficult for the author to conscientiously fulfill this duty. The theme of the partisan movement to this day remains a huge "dark spot" in the history of the Great War. The original documents have always been and are still in the archives of the NKVD - KGB - FSB, and these archives are still considered "departmental" and are not even included in the state archival fund. Before the disclosure of these archives, any research on the "partisan theme" can be considered only the first, rough drafts. And even these "outlines" are extremely few [151, 156, 157, 158]. One of the most informative can be considered the book "Partisans and the Army" published in 2001, unique in terms of richness of documentary material. Of particular value to this book is the fact that its author is not just a doctor of historical sciences, a full member of the Academy, etc., but also a former KGB colonel, and the epilogue to the book was written by the legendary partisan saboteur I.G. Starinov. Without further ado, let us quote a few paragraphs from this book, emphasizing the key (in our opinion) words: until May 1942 ... Most partisan detachments (created in Belarus by September 1941 - M.S.)

were completely formed from employees

The NKVD and the police, without the involvement of local residents, the connection with the Soviet party activists was not established ... later, in the process of creating partisan detachments by the regional committees of the party from among the local party-Soviet activists, their leading core was still made up of operational officers of the NKVD At the end of 1941 and at the

beginning of 1942, the creation and abandonment of partisan formations continued ... the basis for the formation of partisan detachments was still the fighters of the destruction battalions, operatives of the NKVD and the police, agents of the state security agenciesThe subordination was clearly defined: the NKVD bodies were in charge of the

organization and directed the activities of partisan detachments, only informing the first secretary of the regional committee about the state of this work The general picture is as follows. In February 1942, the NKVD, together with the party organs,

prepared and transferred 1,798 partisan detachments and 1,533 sabotage groups to the rear of the enemy, with a total number of 77,939 people. If we proceed from the fact that in 1941 the total number of partisans in the occupied territory was about 90 thousand people, and the number of partisan detachments - 2 thousand, then it turns out that 90% were trained by the NKVD. They led them" [151, p.71, 76, 82, 83]. So, at the initial stage of the war (until the spring of 1942), the "people's avengers" detachments consisted mainly not of teenagers and old people with a Berdan coat - as it was customary to portray

in all Soviet mythology - but of operational officers of the NKVD-NKGB. The number of partisans from among the local residents-volunteers did not exceed 10-15 thousand people, i.e. was tens of times less than the number of "policemen" and "hivi"! This was the beginning of the guerrilla war. In the future, the situation

has changed significantly.

Moreover, in the opposite direction from the expected one: "The UNKVD in the Leningrad Region sent 287 detachments with a total number of 11,733 people behind enemy lines. By February 7, 1942, only 60 detachments of 1965 people remained, **i.e. around 17%...**

... In Ukraine, the state security agencies left behind enemy lines and transferred 778 partisan detachments and 622 sabotage groups with a total number of 28,753 people there. However, as of August 25, 1942 ... only 22 detachments, numbering 3310 people, were listed as active. Consequently, during the 12 months of the war, **less than 3%** of partisan detachments and groups from among those abandoned behind enemy lines in 1941

survived ... The situation in Belarus was no better ... By January 1942, out of 437 groups and detachments that were abandoned behind enemy lines, 412, **or 95%**, ceased to exist .

... In the very first winter of war, almost all large formations, numbering several hundred people, were destroyed or disintegrated into separate groups ... By the middle of 1942, the number of partisans was **65 thousand people ...** ” [151, p. 82, 158, 174]

The above figures in themselves give a clear and exhaustive answer to the question about the attitude of the population of the territories of the USSR occupied by the Germans to the "people's avengers" from among the "state security agencies". Nevertheless, let us supplement these dry, albeit terrible in their eloquence, figures with two testimonies of eyewitnesses and participants in those tragic events.

In Mogilev, occupied by the Nazis, an underground "Committee for Assistance to the Red Army" operated. The organizer and leader of this organization K.Yu. Matte reported to the Central Headquarters of the partisan movement: "A significant part

of the Soviet-minded population left with the Red Army or was forced to remain silent and disguise. The main tone in the mood of the population was set by counter-revolutionary elements (having a criminal record, all sorts of "former people", etc.) and broad philistine strata, who greeted the Germans very kindly, hurried to take the best places in the service and provide them with all kinds of help. This number included a significant part of the intelligentsia, in particular, many teachers, doctors, accountants, engineers, etc. Many young women and girls began to intensively get acquainted with German officers and soldiers, invite them to their apartments, walk with them, etc. . It seemed somehow strange and surprising why the Germans have so many of their supporters among our population ... Speaking of youth, it is necessary

It should be noted that the lack of patriotism, the communist worldview, was very striking in a significant part of it ... "[158]

The second evidence is a document issued in December 1943 by one of the military intelligence units of fascist Germany with a stunning title: "On the need to turn the Eastern campaign into a civil war." The situation of the first months of the war is described in it as follows:

"... Countless prisoners and defectors reported the unwillingness and **indifference of the masses, who did not know what they were fighting for.** The interrogations also clearly showed that ... everywhere there were people who mortally hated the Stalinist system ... Most of the Red Army soldiers surrounded in 1941 soon voluntarily left the forests and surrendered. Stalin's order to organize a partisan movement in the occupied regions did not at first find a response. No one knew what he should fight for... This internal crisis of the Soviet Union explains the **joyous expectation with which most of the population greeted the advancing German troops...**" [VIZH, 1994, No. partisan groups created in the first

year of the war was quite natural. According to the plan of the Soviet leadership, these small detachments (the average number, as shown above, was 20-25 people) were to play the role of "condensation centers", around which, figuratively speaking, "clouds" were to gather. In fact, the number of partisans not only did not grow, but by the summer of 1942 it even decreased by one and a half times! And this despite the fact that the area of the occupied territories increased markedly after the Kharkov disaster and the breakthrough of the Germans to Stalingrad and Mordovsk. Particularly impressive is the dynamics of changes in the number of partisan formations in Ukraine, where they were almost completely defeated.

To all the circumstances of a general order (due to which the huge masses of the population of the occupied regions met the Germans, if not with "joyful expectation", then at least with passive indifference), it must be added that the very idea of turning the "friends of the people" from the NKVD into organizers and inspirers mass liberation movement was absurd and unrealizable.

Employees of the "organs", which in the 20-30s were called "punitive" without unnecessary sentimentality, could not but bring to the partisan movement all their previous skills acquired during the years of mass repressions. Suspicion going beyond any reasonable limits, the habit of terror and provocations, complete indifference to the victims among the civilian population - all this was fully manifested in the activities of partisan detachments hastily molded from "NKVD operational officers." It should not be forgotten that the system for

training professional saboteurs was almost completely destroyed during the years of the Great Terror, and most of the experienced special forces were erased into "camp dust". Sometimes it came to complete absurdity. So, in October 1941, GlavPUR sent out to the army political agencies "Instructions on the organization and actions of partisan detachments", drawn up in 1919! [151] In fact, the Chekists, who in 1941 were instructed to unleash a sabotage and terrorist war in the rear of the German army, could be considered "military experts" (i.e. people capable of training and organizing village peasants) only by rank and position, but no matter how prepared you are. Yes, and Comrade Ponomarenko himself, who led the Central Headquarters of the Partisan Movement (TSSHPP) in one of the sanatoriums near Moscow, is not a namesake, but the same secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus, who in July 1938 sent encrypted messages to Moscow with a request to increase the limits on shooting "kulak-insurgent, Socialist-Revolutionary element" [74, p. 151]. According to Starinov, "by the beginning of the Great Patriotic War, Ponomarenko had no idea about partisan actions," and about Ponomarenko's famous idea of a "rail war," Starinov writes even more simply: "You have to be an absolute fool to undermine the rails Explosives should have been spent not on blowing up rails, but on train derailment, the effect would have been tens and hundreds of times higher" [151, p. 259, 267]. Speaking of explosives. For all the years of

the war, the partisans received mines issued by the Soviet less one percent industry. Soviet bomber aviation dropped more than 1 million tons of bombs on the enemy, including 100,000 tons of bombs on railways. At the same time, the partisans were delivered, according to estimates

Starinov, 13 thousand tons of various cargoes, i.e. less than 1.5% of the total mass of bombs dropped on the enemy. Ukrainian partisans during the entire war received only 147 tons of explosives. In other words, even the most insignificant redistribution of available resources could make it possible to multiply the supply of weapons and explosives to the partisans, and ultimately inflict incomparably greater damage on the enemy. Thus, according to Starinov, Ukrainian partisans, having used up only seven tons of explosives (and this is the combat load of three medium bombers), paralyzed traffic on the Ternopil-Shepetovka-Orsha railway for several months [151]. In the words of Ulyanov

(Lenin), all these mistakes can hardly be blamed personally on Ponomarenko, Voroshilov and other "Moscow partisans". They wanted the best, but sheer incompetence (together with a stubborn unwillingness to transfer the control of the partisan movement from the hands of the party-punitive bodies to military professionals) caused enormous damage to the cause. With great bloodshed, at the cost of the death of hundreds of partisan detachments, in the course of deadly "showdowns" among the highest command personnel, it was necessary to re-create effective methods of training, management, and material support for partisans. By 1943-1944, the mass scale of the people's war against the invaders also increased incomparably. So, in Belarus, where the presence of huge forests created especially favorable conditions, the number of partisans in April 1943 was 68,498 people. In total, by April 1, 1943, there were 110,889 partisans in the territory occupied by the Germans. According to the TsSHPD report, as of June 1, 1943, 1061 detachments with a total number of 142,000 fighters were in touch with the headquarters of the partisan movement. Finally, by January 1944, the number of Belorussian partisans reached 122,000, and in the winter of 1944, **200,000 partisans** fought behind enemy lines [151, 158]. Everything is relative. There

were several times more armed accomplices of the invaders. In particular, this conclusion is

true in relation to Ukraine. In January 1943, the Ukrainian headquarters of the partisan movement had contact with partisan detachments with a total number of 8582 people, on March 5, 1943, Ponomarenko in a report to Stalin estimated the total number of 74 partisan detachments in Ukraine at 12,631 people -

compare this with the numbers of Ukrainian policemen and SS men given above. It is worth noting that even in the "army" of Old Man Makhno there were more than 40 thousand people, and in just a few months of the occupation of Ukraine by German troops in 1918, partisan detachments arose with a total number of 200 to 300 thousand people [151, p. 174, 36]. It would be highly erroneous to consider these

figures

or their ratio as the results of a certain "vote": so many

percent of the population was for the Germans, so much against them. And the point is not only that the "decision" to join a partisan detachment or, conversely, a police battalion, was often taken under compulsion, under the threat of reprisal, and did not reflect political convictions at all, but only the "survival strategy" chosen by this person. In fact, most of the population of the occupied territories invariably supported the strongest. And this ugly conclusion is by no means the invention of a vicious anti-communist. Half a century ago, D. Korotchenko, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (b) of Ukraine, was forced to state: "The absolute majority of the civilian population in Ukraine did not want to continue the fight against the Germans, but tried in various ways to adapt to the occupation regime." In the autumn of 1941, the Germans were presented as the "strongest" - and hundreds of thousands went to enroll in the "policemen" and "Khivi". After Stalingrad and the Battle of Kursk, the pendulum of war swung the other way - and immediately began mass desertion from the "national" units, the ranks of partisans began to grow rapidly.

A clear change in the balance of power in the occupied territory allowed the Central Headquarters in March 1943 to turn to the elders and "policemen" with a message like this: "You can get forgiveness from the Soviet government for yourself and your families if you begin to honestly serve the Soviet people ... Help partisans... Exterminate the German brigands. If you act like this, Motherland, the Soviet government will forgive you and not a single hair will fall from your head. This call did not go unanswered. According to some reports, by the summer of 1944, a quarter of the partisan detachments of Belarus consisted of former "policemen" and "volunteers" of the Wehrmacht [158]. There is nothing particularly "seditious" in this - the situation is quite standard

for any civil war. The trouble is that the increase in quantity achieved in this way was sometimes accompanied by a noticeable drop in quality. Here, for example, is the report of Kleshchev, authorized by the TsSHPD for the Pinsk region,

dated July 12, 1943: "... t. Shibinsky, commander of the "Death to Fascism" detachment and secretary of the Streminsky district committee of the Communist Party of Belarus, surrounded himself with former policemen, burgomasters, and drank. Under the leadership of Shibinsky, executions were carried out on people whose guilt before the Motherland had not been proven by anyone. A significant part of the policemen accepted into the detachment continued police traditions (drunkenness, beating the population) ... Under the

leadership of Shibinsky, the detachment almost did not engage in sabotage work at all" [158]. The detachment under the command of the party secretary, the drunkard and murderer Shibinsky, was probably not the only one that "did not engage in sabotage work." Partisan groups, "entrenched without means of communication in a deep forest, doing nothing for months either for reconnaissance or for sabotage, but only requisitioning food from local residents" [151, p. 70], there were many. One has to come to this conclusion by analyzing the figures of losses suffered by the partisans. So, in Belarus, during the first two and a half years of the war, they lost only 8327 people killed and missing, and this figure is most likely overestimated, since only 3890 dead were known by name [158]. Comparing these figures with the declared total number of Belarusian partisans (68 thousand in April 1943 and 122 thousand in January 1944), we find a clear "inconsistency". One can only dream of such a low level of losses in a fierce struggle against a well-armed, numerous and skillful enemy. For reference, in the units of the active Red Army, irretrievable losses amounted to 42% of the average monthly payroll number of personnel in 1942 and 26% in 1943 [35, p. 152]. Taking into account the wounded, losses increased by another three or four times, but if in the regular army most of the wounded still ended up in the hospital and returned to duty, then what awaited the wounded in the partisan forest? With all reservations regarding the inaccuracy and incompleteness of the above loss figures, it should be assumed that the actual number of **actively operating**

partisan detachments was significantly lower than the figures that Ponomarenko's headquarters presented in their reports.

With all this, the heroic struggle of partisans and underground fighters became the most important front of the nationwide Patriotic War. Every minute risking not only their own lives, but also the lives of their loved ones, despising death and torment, they made a huge contribution to the victory over the fascist enemy. According to the most conservative estimates, the Germans and their allies suffered 7-8% of all their losses in the East from the actions of the partisans - and this despite the fact that the number of partisan forces at all stages of the war was ten times smaller than the number of the active army, and they spent 500 times less ammunition than the troops at the front. However, the effectiveness of the actions of the partisans cannot be reduced only to direct losses of the enemy in battles with them. The main task successfully solved by the Soviet partisans was the destruction of communications of the German armies. An analysis carried out after the war on the basis of captured documents showed that as a result of sabotage on the railways, 18 thousand echelons crashed (of which 15 thousand - in 1943-1944), the enemy irretrievably lost 2400 steam locomotives, breaks in traffic amounted to a total of 6000 days.

An outstanding example of the successful interaction between partisans and the regular army was Operation Bagration, the largest offensive operation of the Red Army, which ended with the liberation of most of Belarus and the defeat of the German Army Group Center. On the night of July 20, 1944, the partisans blew up **40,000 railroad tracks**, completely paralyzing all railway communication behind enemy lines. The capacity of highways has decreased three times as a result of sabotage. At the stage of preparation of the operation, underground workers and partisan intelligence officers revealed and reported to the Soviet command data on the location of 33 German headquarters, 30 airfields, 70 large warehouses [151, p. 223-238]. No less significant was the impact of the

partisan struggle on the moral and psychological state of the invaders' troops. These "losses" in the combat effectiveness of the German army are difficult to express arithmetically, but they were, and were very tangible. During the period 1943-1944, when every German garrison, every

motorcade, each train echelon were in a state of constant expectation of an attack, the newspaper slogan "the earth is burning under the feet of the invaders" became a reality.

Catastrophe

Catastrophe. This word has repeatedly appeared on the pages of our narrative to refer to what happened to the Red Army in the summer of 1941. But in the history of the Second World War, this word has another meaning. Catastrophe or Holocaust (burnt offering in ancient Greek) - these terms are commonly used to refer to the death of most of the Jewish population of Europe as a result of the genocide organized by Nazi Germany. In most civilized countries of the world, these words do not need any translation or explanation. The history of the Holocaust is included in school textbooks, and the most visited historical museum in the world is the US State Holocaust Memorial Museum [159]. For a number of reasons, discussion of this topic was not encouraged in the Soviet Union, to put it mildly. Not a single city (except Minsk) had a single monument directly dedicated to the memory of the victims of the genocide. Since the end of the 40s, the monuments that appeared in the first post-war years were rebuilt - Jewish symbols and Yiddish inscriptions were removed. A gloomy symbol of absurdity has become a "cut off" to the state of a five-pointed hexagonal star of David on the grave of Holocaust victims in the city of Nevel (Pskov region). And only since the beginning of the 90s did historical truth begin to return to the pages of books and newspapers, to the marble of obelisks, in the speeches of politicians and the memory of peoples.

There are at least two reasons why the chapter on the Holocaust is a necessary and integral part of our book. Firstly, it was precisely the defeat and disorderly retreat of the Red Army in the first weeks of the war that doomed almost 3 million Jews to death - half of all the victims of the Holocaust.

Secondly, in the history of the Holocaust on Soviet soil, those characteristic features of the relationship between the people and the authorities, officious propaganda and the real state of public consciousness and morality, without taking into account

which it is impossible to understand the causes of the unprecedented military catastrophe that befell the Soviet Union and its army.

To begin with, some dry numbers and well-known facts. For several centuries, the countries of Eastern Europe - the Polish Commonwealth, Lithuania, Hungary, Bessarabia, Russia - were the area where most of the entire Jewish people lived. By the time the Second World War began, 2.15 million Jews lived in the western republics and regions of the Soviet Union, later occupied by German and Romanian troops. In the future, each new step of the "active foreign policy of the USSR" transferred more and more hundreds of thousands of Jews to the category of citizens of the Soviet Union: 250 thousand in Lithuania, 80 thousand in Latvia, 300 thousand in Moldova. The biggest "catch" took place in September 1939, when vast areas of eastern Poland, where 1300 thousand Jews lived, were included in the Soviet Ukraine and Belarus. Thus, by June 22, 1941, more than 4 million Jews were concentrated in the territory that was to become occupied. In addition, in the border areas there were about 200-250 thousand Jewish refugees from the western regions of Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Romania.

Later, after the war, communist historians did a simple arithmetic trick and stopped considering natives of Poland, the Baltic states, and Romania as Soviet citizens. Thus, they managed to more than halve the number of victims of the Holocaust on Soviet soil, "rewriting" the dead as victims of the genocide in Poland, Romania, etc. This shameful cheating game not only contradicts all legal norms (at the time of the occupation, the future victims were citizens of the USSR), but also does not fit in at all with the many years of allegations of the same propaganda that the "liberation campaigns" were aimed at "protecting the population of Poland and the Baltic states from the horrors of the fascist occupation.

Judging by the way the events of the summer of 1941 unfolded, the leaders of that time - as well as later propagandists - were absolutely alien to the idea that the state bears any responsibility for the lives of its subjects. To this day, not a single document has been found, not a single evidence that the Soviet government was even looking for ways to save those of its citizens who

who, under the conditions of occupation, did not expect a difficult, joyless, hungry LIFE, but a cruel and inevitable

DEATH. Headquarters Directive No. 45 of July 2, 1941 "On the procedure for the evacuation of the population and material assets" contains many points and subparagraphs. In paragraph 9, it is prescribed "do not evacuate sick horses, destroy them on the spot." Further, after the sick horses, paragraph 13 says: "The families of the military and leading civilian workers should be evacuated by the railway. transport" [5, p. 43].

And not a single word about what to do with families (as a rule, large families) of Jews. Of

course, to take out in a matter of days (the Red Army retreated, fled from Lithuania, most of Belarus, the western regions of Ukraine in the first 7-10 days of the war) two million people was technically impossible. The statement of this indisputable fact should not belittle the significance of the fact that the authorities did not make the slightest attempt to take out at least someone, even several thousand children. Moreover, in the first days, the most critical for the fate of the Jewish population of the border regions, on the "old border" (i.e., the Soviet-Polish border of 1939), frontier posts continued to operate, which detained everyone who did not have a special permit or party card! [159, p. 268] This wildly absurd practice of evacuating the population only with "permits to leave" continued for several more weeks. It is difficult to explain it with arguments of sound logic. People are the most valuable "resource", which the enemy has no reason to leave. By the way, during the "second retreat" (in the summer of 1942), evacuation was seen as a patriotic duty of citizens. Most likely, at the beginning of the war, the bureaucratic instinct "to grab and not let go" simply

worked. Any independent activity, especially such a significant one as a change of residence, without a special sanction from the authorities, seemed to be a violation of all norms and principles. However, judging by some documents, the authorities prevented the evacuation of the civilian

population also because, having gone berserk from the cries of their own propaganda, they hoped that the civilians would "stand up as one" and tear them apart with their bare hands.

invaders. The leader of the Belarusian communists P.K. Ponomarenko at the beginning of July 1941 reported to Moscow:

"... I must emphasize the exceptional fearlessness, steadfastness and implacability towards the enemy of the collective farmers, in contrast to some part of the service people of the cities, who think of nothing but saving their skins. This is explained to a certain extent by the large Jewish stratum in the cities. They were seized by an animal fear of Hitler, and instead of fighting they were fleeing..." [112, p. 211] One can appreciate the righteous anger that seized Panteleimon Kondratyich, only knowing that the government of the

BSSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party, headed by Ponomarenko, fled Minsk already on June 24, three days before the advanced units reached the northern outskirts of Minsk Panzer Group Gotha. They fled in cars, with armed guards. They fled, leaving the city to the mercy of fate, without organizing the evacuation of people and factories. 80 thousand Jews (residents of Minsk and numerous refugees from the surrounding villages and cities), deprived, unlike Comrade Ponomarenko, of the practical opportunity to "save their skins", died in the Minsk ghetto...

If it was difficult to save at least part of the Jewish population, and it was almost impossible to take out all of them, then it was quite simple to notify people of the mortal danger threatening them. Easier and cheaper than destroying all sick horses. A black "plate" of a loudspeaker hung on every village street, not to mention the cities. Newspapers and leaflets were published in millions of copies. Something, but the Soviet government was able to instruct the population "on the true path", and the infrastructure necessary for this was created long before the war. But nothing was done. Absolutely nothing. Even in cases where an act of mass extermination of Jews was explicitly described, newspaper articles used either streamlined formulations ("the Nazis drove several thousand peaceful Soviet citizens to the anti-tank ditch ..."), or "Stakhanovite workers", "Komsomol members", "parents and wives of the Red Army."

ideologically

profitable

stamps:

The first large-scale information campaign took place only on August 24, 1941. On that day, a "radio meeting of the Jewish community" was broadcast on the All-Union Radio. The report on the rally was also placed in all the central newspapers. The main task

The event was the activation of the Jewish communities of England and the USA, which should have pushed the ruling circles of these countries to provide more effective assistance to the USSR. But, regardless of the plan of the organizers, this radio broadcast helped to inform the Jews of the Soviet Union about the threat looming over them. Unfortunately, the information is extremely late. By this time, the Baltic States, Belarus, Moldova, most of the Left-Bank Ukraine, the western regions of the Smolensk region were already occupied.

As for the official statements of the country's leadership, the first mention of the brutal reprisals against the Jewish population appeared in the note of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of the USSR dated January 6, 1942. In this document, a whole paragraph was devoted to the tragedy of Babi Yar and the death of 52 thousand Jews in Kiev. Finally, on December 19, 1942, a special statement of the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs was published "The implementation by the Nazi authorities of plans for the extermination of the Jewish population of Europe." By the time this statement was released, there was no one to notify. In December 1942, the last 250,000 prisoners lived out their last days in ghettos and concentration camps in the occupied territories of the Soviet Union [159]. It is noteworthy that the statement, actually summing up the implementation of the "plans of the Hitlerite authorities", did not call on local residents, partisan

commanders to save those who could still be saved ... Thus, the only means of notification was the oral rumor of the people, and the main means of transport for the refugees was a pair of legs. There were no horses anymore (collectivization), there were no personal vehicles yet, bicycles were requisitioned "for the needs of the army" in the first days of the war. Nevertheless, about 1 million (according to other sources - up to 1.5 million) Jews were able to overtake the advancing German army. Mostly residents of the RSFSR and the eastern regions of Ukraine were saved - they had more time, moreover, many were taken out in an organized manner as workers of evacuated industrial enterprises. About 3 million people remained in the occupied territory, including: 220 thousand in Lithuania, 620 thousand in Western and 180 thousand in Eastern Belarus, 250 thousand in Moldova, 1.5 million in Ukraine.

Four "Einsatzgruppen" SS were sent to the territory of the USSR to exterminate the Jews, with a total number of about 3 thousand people.

Human. Of these, at least 600 people are technical personnel: drivers, mechanics, radio operators, translators. In order to find, identify, and detain 3 million Jews with such forces (who at the same time hid in every possible way, forged documents, hid in fields, forests and swamps), the Germans would probably need just that thousand years that the Third Reich hoped to exist. In other words, both the pace and the very possibility of implementing the "Final Solution to the Jewish Question" depended to a large extent on the attitude of the local residents towards this matter. The history of the Holocaust

provides examples of a wide variety of scenarios. So, they completely refused to participate in the implementation of Hitler's plans for genocide

Finland, Spain, Bulgaria - countries that were considered allies of Nazi Germany. In Italy and Hungary, the mass extermination of Jews began only after the occupation of these countries by the Nazis (respectively, in 1943-1944). The authorities and people of Denmark saved almost the entire Jewish community of their country by transporting 8,000 people by sea to neutral Sweden.

On the eve of the war, 350,000 Jews lived in France. About 100 thousand people were sheltered by local residents and Catholic monasteries, another 40-50 thousand Jews secretly crossed over to Spain and Switzerland. 83 thousand people died - less than one-fourth of the pre-war Jewish

population. A third of the Jewish communities of the Czech Republic and Serbia survived. One in four Jews was able to find refuge in Belgium and the Netherlands - an amazing fact, given the size of these countries, population density, lack of large forest areas and four full years of German occupation. In the occupied territories of the Soviet Union, the "proportion of destruction" everywhere exceeded 90%. The Holocaust in the Baltics was unprecedented in terms of pace, cruelty, and the degree of involvement of the local population - up to 96% of the Jews who remained in the occupation were exterminated. In total, 2,825 thousand Soviet Jews perished at the hands of the invaders and their accomplices. Most of the survivors are prisoners of the ghetto in the Romanian zone of occupation (the so-called Transnistria, the territory of Ukraine between the Dniester and the Southern Bug). At the beginning of the war, the extermination of Jews by the Romanian troops and the gendarmerie was massive and

character (for example, on October 23, 1941, 19 thousand people were burned alive in the premises of artillery depots in Odessa). But after Stalingrad, the Romanian leadership stopped the massacres, and then allowed the delivery of food aid from international organizations to the ghetto. As for the zone of German occupation, almost all the Jews who did not have time to evacuate died there [159, p. 43, 96, 167, 206].

Even if we had no other documents and memories at our disposal, the highest "efficiency" and the totality of the genocide achieved on Soviet soil alone irrefutably testifies that the SS executioners found here the necessary number of accomplices from the local population. Unfortunately, there are documents, facts, and miraculously surviving witnesses of such atrocities that simply do not fit into human consciousness. It was the executioners and fanatics from among the former Soviet citizens who brought to the cause of the "final solution of the Jewish question" the passion that the servants of the soulless machine of the fascist state were deprived of.

On July 4, 1941, Latvian nationalists in Riga herded 500 people into the synagogue and burned them alive, 4,000 Jews were beaten with crowbars or drowned in Kaunas, on July 10, in the Western Belarusian town of Jedwabne (now it is the territory of Poland), local residents after torture and bullying 1600 Jews were burned alive. Often, local "policemen" were in a hurry to take on such "work", which the Germans themselves refused at the initial stage of the war. Thus, the first mass execution of young Jewish children in Ukraine was carried out on August 19 near Bila Tserkva by the local police. On September 6, 1941, the SS Sonderkommando, having destroyed 1,100 adult Jews in Radomyshl, instructed the Ukrainian police to kill 561 children. Sadistic enthusiasm was so great and contagious that on September 24, Field Marshal Rundstedt, commander of Army Group South, issued an order forbidding Wehrmacht servicemen "to participate in the excesses of the local population" [159, p. 146, 159].

But even these horrific events should not be seen as the main difference in the tactics of carrying out the Holocaust on Soviet soil and in Western Europe. It is important to note that on

In the West, the genocide of the Jews was concealed, while in the East they were persistently demonstrated.

Why? The creation and operation of any factory - including the "factory of death" - requires money. Tall chimneys of crematoria had to be built, furnaces had to be provided with fuel, gas chambers had to be provided with expensive chemicals. The delivery of hundreds of thousands of victims to Auschwitz and Majdanek distracted steam locomotives and wagons from meeting the needs of the front, and occupied railways. In the summer of 1944, the Germans took 445,000 Jews of Hungary to Auschwitz. And this despite the fact that the military situation that summer was not much better for the Wehrmacht than for the Red Army - in the summer of 1941! At the same time, the Jews of the Soviet Union (with a few rare exceptions) were not taken anywhere far, they were exterminated right at their place of residence, openly, in front of the eyes of the population and with the involvement of everyone.

One of the possible explanations for this paradox, strange at first glance, can be considered that for Western Europe the Nazis could not come up with any explanation that satisfies the public consciousness of the expediency of the genocide of the Jews. The thesis that Jews are "racially inferior subhumans" could only frighten and alert a Frenchman or a Hungarian ("won't they announce us next?"). Well, the old anger about the fact that "the Jews crucified Christ" no longer worked in civilized Europe of the 20th century. As a result, in order not to cause undesirable sentiments among the population of the occupied countries of Western Europe, the Nazis went to huge, extremely burdensome expenses in a big war.

"Beat the Jewish political officer, his face asks for a brick." The text of this famous leaflet, which rained down from the sky in huge quantities on the columns of the retreating Soviet troops, expressed the very essence of the matter in a simple, accessible, memorable form. Not just a "Jew" and not just a "political officer", but precisely a "Jew-political officer". A small dash (against all the rules of arithmetic) became a sign not of subtraction and addition, but of multiplication of hatred. On the fourth day of the war, Ponomarenko, whom we have mentioned many times, reported to Stalin: "All their agitation, oral and written, goes under the flag of the fight against the Jews and the Communists, which is interpreted as synonyms" [112]. Precisely for the proof of the identity of the concepts

"Jew and commissar", "Jews and Soviet power" was sent to the entire powerful propaganda apparatus of the Third Reich. In millions of leaflets, in thousands of newspaper publications, in countless oral speeches, the idea was carried out that it was the Jews who were the main active force of the communist regime, that it was they and only they who unleashed the "Red Terror", that it was precisely and only the Jews that made up the living among the

impoverished country bosses. Accordingly, the public humiliation, and then the brutal extermination of the Jews, was, according to the plan of the Nazis, to "liberate" the population of the occupied regions of the Soviet Union from fear of the Soviet regime, to kindle hatred for all bearers of communist

ideology. The fact that the vast majority of the victims of the genocide had nothing to do with the punitive system of the NKVD, and even outwardly did not at all resemble the "fattening bosses", did not bother either the Nazis, or their accomplices, or (most importantly and tragically) ordinary people. Soviet society was psychologically prepared for a long time and carefully for such phenomena as mass extrajudicial terror, punishment without crime, collective responsibility of entire population groups for the crimes (often fictional) of individuals. Did the so-called "fists" look like parasites lying on the stove? And how many so-called "Trotskyists" have seen the living Trotsky, or even read some of his books? And the inclusion of entire peoples in the category of "suspicious elements" (which found its expression in the arrests and deportations of Koreans, Chinese, Poles, Latvians) was not a wonder for Soviet people.

It must be admitted that the Nazis skillfully used for their own purposes the "preparatory work" carried out with the population by another totalitarian regime. A special role in inciting hatred towards Jews was played by the mass executions of prisoners carried out in a number of places by the NKVD on the eve of the withdrawal of the Red Army. The Germans did not pass by such a "gift". The Jews were declared responsible for this atrocity (although by the year 1941 the Jews from the NKVD were almost completely "cleaned out"). Mutilated, decomposing corpses were laid out in the squares, the population was rounded up, and in an atmosphere of mass psychosis, incited by professional provo

the crowd began a Jewish pogrom. So, at the dug graves, one bloody dictatorship passed the "baton" of crimes to another ...

Of course, the executioners and their accomplices made up, at the most, 2-3% of the total adult population of the occupied regions. We should not forget that normal people were deprived of the opportunity to express even a moral condemnation to them - the executioners were armed and relied on the support of the entire military machine of Nazi Germany. However, it would be a big and false simplification of the real situation to say that the position of the majority of the population was neutral. And the point is not only that the lack of simple human sympathy (especially ridicule and mockery on the part of recent neighbors, colleagues, students) literally stunned the Jews, deprived many of them of the will to live and resist. A significant part of the population, although not directly participating in the murders, willingly profited from the robbery of Jewish property, from looting "trade", when family jewels were exchanged for a piece of bread. There were people of a new profession - the so-called "shmaltsovniki". They were hunters for Jews who, having discovered those hiding, extorted a ransom from them for not informing them. Then, having taken everything that was possible from the victim ("having melted the lard"), they handed over the Jews to the occupying authorities [159, p. 295]

A very vivid illustration of all that has been said can be such an excerpt from the report by K.Yu. mentioned in the previous chapter. Matte - one of the leaders of the Mogilev underground:

"... In the first months of the occupation, the Germans physically destroyed all the Jews. This fact caused a lot of different arguments (note - not hatred for the executioners, not compassion for the victims, but "various arguments"! - M.S). The most reactionary part of the population, relatively small, fully justified this atrocity and assisted them in this. The main philistine part did not agree with such a brutal reprisal, but argued that the Jews themselves are to blame for the fact that everyone hates them, but it would be enough to limit them

economically and politically...

... The rest of the population, Soviet-minded, sympathized and helped the Jews in many ways, but they were very indignant at the passivity of the Jews, since they gave themselves up for slaughter without making a single, even spontaneous attempt to oppose the Germans in the city or

mass departure to the partisans ... pro-Soviet people noted that before the war, many Jews tried to get more profitable and good official positions, established mutual responsibility among themselves ... "And now the Jews also expect help from the Russian Ivanovs, and they themselves do nothing," they said.

Considering the mood of the population, it was impossible to openly and directly **defend the Jews in agitation work ... since this, of course, could cause a negative attitude towards our leaflets** (emphasized by me. - M.S.) even on the part of our Soviet-minded people or people close to us" [158].

The text is amazing. Judging by it, the population perceives what is happening as a war between Jews and Germans. A minority actively takes the side of the Germans, the bulk of them quietly gloat ("the Jews themselves are to blame"). The best ones are indignant at the passivity of the Jews, but at the same time they themselves sit in the city and are not going to leave for the partisans ("the Germans do not touch us"). The mere thought that the "Russian Ivan" should get into this fight that is alien to him causes extreme irritation among these wonderful "Soviet-minded people". In a word, monolithic unity and deep internationalism. It is worth noting that the occupation posters posted in Mogilev in the spring of 1943 promised 5 packs of shag for one extradited Jew [159]. Cheap, even in military hard times cheap. But, apparently, the inhabitants of the city did not even try to "get a job in more profitable places", many were satisfied with shag ...

There was no monolithic unity. Among the bloody madness, there courage, ~~self-sacrifice. Despite the highest threat of the occupiers~~ (execution, and the whole family, was relied not only for harboring Jews, but also for failure to inform), thousands of people of all nationalities came to the aid of the outcasts. The Israeli Memorial Research Center "Yadva-Shem" has established more than 18 thousand names of people who saved Jews during the years of the genocide. Among them are 5500 Poles, 1609 Ukrainians, 488 Lithuanians, 440 Belarusians. In the Belarusian town

of Breslav, 60 families were involved in saving Jews - ordinary peasants, doctors, Orthodox and Catholic priests. In the hero city of Brest, out of 25,000 Jews survived

19 people. Six of them were saved by the family of Polina Makarenko, hiding in their house.

A resident of Uman, a veteran and invalid of the First World War, Alexander Dyatlov, hid 12 Jews in his house. One of the neighbors informed the Germans. The entire Dyatlov family was shot, including three children.

During the three years of occupation, the educators of orphanages in Minsk hid more than 500 Jewish children from the punishers. 12 children were saved by the head of orphanage No. 2 in Kyiv. Wehrmacht captain Willy Schulz took 26 people out of the Minsk ghetto in a truck. The burgomaster of the city of Kremenchug, Sinitsa-Verkhovsky, was shot in November 1941 for issuing false identity cards to Jews. The peasants of the village of Rakovets (Western Ukraine) sheltered 33 Jewish families. In the village of Kuyalnik (Odessa region), collective farmer V.M. Ivanov saved 25 people... [159]

And not all Jews "passively gave themselves to the slaughter." The history of Jewish resistance goes far beyond the scope of this book. We confine ourselves to a brief mention of a few facts.

In August 1943, an uprising began in the Jewish ghetto of Bialystok. The rebels, who were armed with 130 firearms, resisted for 6 days - 2 days longer than the 10th Army of the Western Front held this city in June 1941 [159]. In 15 partisan brigades of the Baranovich region of Belarus, 8493 partisans fought, of which Belarusians accounted for 46.8%, Jews - 12.4%. By the time the republic was liberated in July 1944, there were 4,852 partisans in the Lida partisan zone. Of these: 2404 - from the local population, 1196 - Jews who fled from the ghetto, 730 - "encircled" and former captured soldiers of the Red Army, 313 - former "policemen" [164].

In the autumn of 1942, three major uprisings took place in Ukraine - in Tuchin, Mizoch, Lutsk. Careful preparation and 60 weapons allowed 3,000 prisoners to escape from the ghetto in Tuchin [159].

Ultimately, the monstrous crimes of the organizers of the Holocaust turned against them. As the same comrade Matte writes: "... the general conclusion of the population turned out to be this: no matter how the German settled with everyone the way he did with the Jews. This made many think about it ... "This awareness of the cannibalistic essence of the Hitler regime became the most important factor that led a significant part of

population of the occupied territories from passive indifference to active armed resistance to the invaders. Among the internal

documents of the TsSHPD that have become known recently, no orders aimed at saving the Jewish population have been found either.

Part 5

WHEN DID THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR BEGIN?

Statement of a question

Was the Soviet Union ready for war? This favorite question of Soviet "historians", which they chewed and chewed with great enthusiasm in hundreds of publications and round tables, today can already be given an exhaustive answer. Is it worth arguing further about "readiness for war" if, according to the most conservative estimates, more than half of the army's personnel deserted or surrendered? After the declassified archival documents about prisoners and deserters, about millions of abandoned rifles and tens of thousands of abandoned tanks and guns, the immediate cause of the defeat is no longer in doubt. At least that is the firm belief of the author of this book. The unbreakable union was ready. Like an avalanche, ready to break down a mountain at the sound of a shot, the Stalinist state was ready to fall apart after the first strong blow.

from the outside.

How simple and obvious is the immediate cause of the defeat of the Red Army, just as complex and ambiguous is the answer to another question: why did the country, the army, the people find themselves in such a powerless, incompetent state? How could this happen in a state that to this day is considered by many to be a model of the strictest order and iron discipline? Why did the most powerful state machine of totalitarian despotism turn into a pile of randomly scattered "wheels and cogs" in a matter of days? What is this - a miracle, a devilish obsession? The archives of the Third Reich have long been carefully studied. There is no doubt that there were no "X-ray generators", no psychotropic weapons capable of turning the army into a crowd of insane people, in the arsenals of the German army. As it was not in

these arsenals and no fundamentally new, unknown, and therefore capable of inspiring panic weapons. And yet, in 1941,

it was not without a miracle. But it was a man-made miracle. The very thing about which in 1929 the dearest N.I. Bukharin wrote with rapture:

“... the GPU has performed the greatest miracle of all time — it has managed to change the very nature of the Russian

people” [125, p. 257]. Until now, the author has tried to stick to the solid ground of facts and documents. It was all the more simple, since our conversation was about pieces, kilometers, tons, division numbers, hours, speeds, etc. Everything. Next is a dead end. Serious answers to the above questions require an appeal to a completely different science - social psychology. It is even doubtful whether today this science is a science in the full sense of the word. All the more difficult is the socio-psychological analysis of the Soviet society of the Stalin era. In the USSR

there were no fair elections, no free press, no public opinion polls, no freedom to travel outside the "big zone". The Soviet people could not express their attitude to power either with a ballot, or free speech in an independent newspaper, or even with their feet (ie, emigration). How can we understand, how can we know with what thoughts and feelings the Soviet people listened at noon on June 22, 1941, to the voice of Comrade Molotov, who from the black plate of the loudspeaker called on them to “rally ranks even more closely around our glorious Bolshevik Party, around our Soviet government, around our great leader Comrade Stalin. There is no exact, satisfying answer to these questions

and never will be. Never. We can only build more or less substantiated guesses, scientifically speaking, hypotheses. So, as a working hypothesis, the author proposes to proceed from the fact that **OUR FATHERS AND GRANDFATHERS WERE NOT STUPIDER than US.** The basis for choosing just such an

assumption is not only commendable respect for elders, but also some logical arguments. Three-quarters of the population of the pre-war USSR

lived in villages or small towns. It (the population) did not read Soviet newspapers before

food, or after eating. For a very simple reason: the majority of people were illiterate. In general, the rumors about the "cultural revolution" created by the Bolsheviks are greatly exaggerated. In the 1937 census, it turned out that even among young people aged 18-19 there were 8.5% of the illiterate, among thirty-year-olds one in four was illiterate. In 1939, 8.2% of workers and only 1.8% of collective farmers had an education of seven grades of secondary school and above! [74 p., 64] In the spring of 1936, the then commander of the Belarusian Military District, commander of the 1st rank I.P.

Uborevich said: "... each call of fighters from the village brings to our barracks 35 semi-literate per hundred. But these "illiterate", in fact, people are completely illiterate: they can hardly write a surname and read two pages in an hour. These are people who do not know who Stalin is, who Hitler is, where is the West, where is the East, what is socialism ... "(VIZH, 1988, No. 10)

The main device for "zombifying" the population was still in the laboratory development stage, and the anesthetic television needles had not yet had time to rise to the sky. To tell the truth, a black plate of a loudspeaker hung on all the poles, but there was a lot of cod and little use from it - both because people were busy with exhausting work, and because of the low professional level of the then "PR people".

All this suggests that "ordinary Soviet people" lived by their own mind. Yes, not with highly developed reading and learning, not enriched with the cultural baggage of previous eras - but with their own. Simple and clear, not crap "mass media". That is why the author proposes to proceed from the fact that the attitude of the ordinary Soviet collective farmer (namely, from them the multi-million army was recruited) to life, to power, to the outbreak of war was quite adequate. That is, corresponding to the attitude of power to his life.

The belligerent cries of official propaganda only intensified the mood of dreary doom. There was little hope that the bad and frightened authorities would be able to get out of the trouble into which they themselves had driven the country. "The great leader and teacher Comrade Stalin" stubbornly (until July 3, 1941) was silent, and this deafening twelve-day silence gave rise to the most

dark forebodings. Or vice versa - the most optimistic hopes for a speedy change of this unprecedented, cannibalistic power.

Let's remember that if for us June 1941 is sixty years ago, then for those who listened to Molotov's speech at noon on June 22, everything happened only twenty years later ...

twenty years in a row

"June 11, 1921, Tambov Order
of the Plenipotentiary Commission in the Central
Executive Committee No. 171 ... In order to finally eradicate the Social
Revolutionary-bandit roots, the Plenipotentiary

Commission of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee orders: 1. Citizens
who refuse to give

their names are shot on the spot without trial ... 4. The family in which the bandit
has taken refuge is subject to arrest and expulsion from the province, its property is
confiscated, the senior worker in this family is shot on the spot without trial.

5. Families hiding members of a bandit's family should be considered as gangsters
and the senior worker of this family should be shot on the spot without trial ... Signatures:
Antonov-

Ovseenko, Tukhachevsky "" June 12, 1921, Tambov ... Forests in which hiding
bandits

must be purged with asphyxiating gases. Everything must be calculated so that
the gas curtain, penetrating into the forest, destroys all life there ...

Signature: Tukhachevsky.

"June 23, 1921, Tambov Order

of the Plenipotentiary Commission of the All-Russian

Central Government Commission No. 216 ... The experience of the first combat
site shows great suitability for the rapid cleansing of known areas of banditry by the
following method of cleaning ... Residents are given 2 hours to issue bandits and
weapons, as well as gangster families ... If the population did not indicate bandits and
weapons, after a two-hour period, the hostages taken in front of the population are shot,
after which new hostages are taken and those gathered at the gathering are again
invited to extradite the bandits ... Everyone must testify without excuses ignorance. In
case of persistence, new executions are carried out ...

Signatures: Antonov-Ovseenko, Tukhachevsky.
"July 10, 1921.

Report of the Chairman of the Plenipotentiary Five, Comrade Uskonin ...

On July 3, an operation began in the village. Theology. It is rare to see such a closed and organized peasantry. When talking with the peasants, from the young to the old man, whitened with gray hairs, all as one on the question of the bandits dissuaded the full

ignorance...

The same methods were repeated as in Osinovka: hostages were taken in the amount of 58 people, on July 4 the first batch was shot - 21 people, on July 5 - 15 people, 60 gangster families were seized - up to 200 people. As a result, the turning point was reached, the peasantry rushed to catch bandits and look for hidden weapons...

As for the village of Kareevka, where, due to its convenient territorial position, there was a convenient place for the bandits to stay permanently, the "five" decided to destroy this village, evicting the entire population and confiscating their property ... After seizing valuable materials - window frames, seeders, etc. — the village was set on fire..." [128, 129] "March 19, 1922, Moscow Letter to members of the Politburo ... this very

moment is not only an
exceptionally favorable, but

in general the only moment when we have 99 out of 100 chances of complete success, smash the enemy utterly and secure the positions we need for many decades to come. Precisely now and only now, when people are being eaten in hungry areas and hundreds, if not thousands of corpses are lying on the roads, we can (and therefore must) carry out the confiscation of church valuables with the most frenzied and merciless energy and without stopping at suppressing any kind of resistance. .

The greater the number of representatives of the reactionary clergy and the reactionary bourgeoisie we manage to shoot on this occasion, the better: we must now teach this public a lesson in such a way that for several decades they will not even dare to think about any resistance ... We can secure a fund for

ourselves in several hundred million gold rubles (one must recall the gigantic wealth of some

monasteries and laurels). Without this fund, no state work in general, no economic development in particular, and no defense of one's position in Genoa in particular, is completely unthinkable...

Signature: Ulyanov (Lenin)" ["News of the Central Committee of the

CPSU, 1990, No. 4, p. 192]. This is war. Merciless, many years of war. War without any rules, beyond all human. Thousands (actually - millions) of corpses who died of starvation cause an explosion of delight. The looted millions are supposed to be spent on anything, but not on rescuing the starving (Soviet statistics indicate that in 1922-1923 only 1 million rubles worth of grain was purchased abroad). It is no longer enough for the

Bolsheviks to simply suppress an open protest - the peasants themselves must catch the rebels and extradite "members of the bandit's family" for reprisal, i.e. children and women. And all those in whom there is still a drop of Christian mercy - to shoot on the spot. No trial. Shoot, of course, not for the sake of capturing "valuable materials" in the form of window frames and seeders, but precisely in order to wean them from the very idea of the possibility of resistance to the new government for decades to come. The word "government" was ordered to be written with a capital letter, the word "God" - with a small one.

Then, when the authorities became stronger and wrote the necessary laws for themselves, they began to shoot and imprison according to the court. On August 7, 1932, the famous Law on strengthening criminal liability "for theft and plunder of collective farm property" was adopted - the people called it the "law on three spikelets." From August 1932 to December 1933 alone, 125,000 "new serfs" were arrested and convicted under this law, of which 5,400 people were shot.

On the scale of the Bolshevik terror, the figure seems to be small - but it is worth remembering that in autocratic, feudal tsarist Russia, 625 death sentences were passed over 80 years (from 1825 to 1905), of which only 191 were executed ... The ferocious cruelty of Stalin's

regime was in no way the result of the bad sadistic tendencies of the new leaders. Nothing like this. Their heads were cold, bright, and they perfectly understood that it would not work in a different way. Even in relatively

during the prosperous years of the NEP, the real marketability of the peasant economy did not exceed 15-20%. This meant that only five or six peasant households could feed one family of an urban worker. Could such proportions suit Comrade Stalin, who planned to create a huge army and equip it with the latest technology?

In 1930, in Ukraine, the state took 30% of the grain from the collective farms, in the North Caucasus - 38%. In the next 1931 - respectively 42 and 47%. The plan of the 32nd year exceeded the indicators of the 31st year by 32%. Moreover, when in the autumn of 1932 it became obvious that it was not possible to fulfill the procurement plan even by completely confiscating all grain (including seed funds), the enraged Kremlin leaders demanded that the collective farms that did not fulfill the grain procurement plan, and "non-grain food resources" - lard, potatoes, onions, beets, pickles [129, 131].

It is highly doubtful that, given the then existing infrastructure for the transportation, storage and processing of agricultural products, most of the confiscated food ended up in factory canteens. In fact, it was "terror by hunger." Once again, the Bolsheviks remembered the testament of their leader and teacher: "to teach them a lesson so that for several decades they would not even dare to think about any resistance ..."

And in Ukraine, on the Don, then - in the Volga region and Kazakhstan, a massive DEATH HUNGER began. Fleeing from starvation millions of peasants went, went, crawled to the cities. The

government reacted quickly. January 22, 1933 for signatures Molotov and Stalin issued a decree of the government of the USSR:

"... The Central Committee and the Government have evidence that the mass exodus of peasants is organized by the enemies of the Soviet regime, counter-revolutionaries and Polish agents ... to prohibit by all possible means the mass movement of the peasantry of Ukraine and the North Caucasus to the cities ..." [129, p. 170] The areas

doomed to starvation were cordoned off by troops. During the first month of this "quarantine", the OGPU reported about the detention of 219,460 people! The Italian

consul in Kharkov reported to his superiors in Rome [129]:

“... Within a week, a service was set up to catch abandoned children... **At** midnight they were taken by trucks to the freight station on the Seversky Donets... there was a medical staff who sorted them out. Those who were not yet swollen from hunger and could survive were sent to barracks on Golodnaya Gora or to barns, where another 8,000 souls, mostly children, died on straw. The weak were sent on freight trains outside the city and left to die away from people. Upon the arrival of the wagons, all the dead were unloaded into large ditches dug in advance ...

... every night in Kharkov they collect 250 corpses of those who died of starvation or typhus. It has been noticed that a large number of them do not have a liver ... from which pies are prepared and sold in the market ... ”

The famine of 1933 had two fundamental differences from the famine of 1921.

Firstly, it was an artificially organized pestilence, while the famine of 1921 was caused by “natural” causes (if only the ruin and decline of the national economy as a result of the war, unleashed by the Bolsheviks can be considered a "natural" process). The harvest of 1932 was really poor, but it was not at all that the crop failure was the cause of the death of millions. Thus, only in Ukraine, 36.5 million centners of grain were collected at the expense of state grain procurements [123]. Based on the fact that two centners of grain a year is enough to feed one person, we come to the conclusion that Ukrainian state procurements alone were enough to provide 18 million starving people with a loaf of bread. And how much grain simply rotted because of the lack of covered currents and elevators, how much was overtaken for vodka ... Secondly, good grandfather Ilyich nevertheless allocated some crumbs for the

purchase of food abroad. Comrade Stalin exported 17.3 million centners of grain from the starving country in 1932 and 16.8 million centners in 1933 [132]. In the same year when pies with human flesh were baked in Kharkov, 47 thousand tons of meat and dairy products, 54 thousand tons of fish were exported from the USSR [132], the country of cannibals exported flour, sugar, sausages, sunflower ... Exact figures characterizing the scale of this unparalleled human sacrifice in history will never be named again. According to the calculations

of the Soviet Ukrainian historian S. Kulchitsky

(from the end of the 60s he worked on the analysis of demographic statistics), only in the 33rd year and only in Ukraine, 3-3.5 million people died of starvation [131]. In those years, the population of Kazakhstan decreased **from 6** to 3 million people [74]. In the Volga region, there was no “withdrawal of non-grain resources” (that is, potatoes and pickles were still left to the collective farmers). As a result, “only” **400** people died of starvation there.
thousands of people.

The main “enemy” in terms of numbers, with whom the Bolsheviks fought, was the peasantry, which by 1917 amounted to four-fifths of the country's population. But the new government did not forget the townspeople either.

From February 1930 to December 1931, **more than 1.8 million people** of “declassed elements and violators of the passport regime” were deported from large cities [129]. Not only bourgeois professors and bourgeois engineers fell under this definition, not only homeless peasants who fled to the city from the collective farm famine, but also urban workers who were rounded up on the street without a passport in their pocket. In archival documents, cases were noted when people with a passport were also caught - for the number in the report; an episode was noted when the head of the regional police department was deported from Moscow as a “violation of the passport regime”.

Those deportees who were very lucky were waiting for forced labor at the great construction sites of communism. So, in September 1932, 42,462 special settlers lived in Magnitogorsk, which accounted for two-thirds of the population of this “city of dreams”. But such luck was not for everyone. “... On April 20 and 30, 1932, two

echelons of declassed elements, a total of 6144 people, were sent from Moscow and Leningrad to a labor settlement ... Arriving in Tomsk, this contingent was transferred to barges and taken to Nazino Island ... On there were no tools on the island, no buildings, no seeds, no crumbs of food ... On May 19, snow fell, the wind rose, and then frost ... People began to die. On the first day, a team of gravediggers was able to bury 295 corpses. Only on the fourth or fifth day did rye flour arrive on the island, which they began to distribute in several hundred grams. Having received flour, people ran to the water and, in hats, footcloths, jackets and trousers, bred a talker and ate it. At the same time, a huge part of them simply ate flour, fell and suffocated, dying from

suffocation ... Soon, cannibalism began on an alarming scale ... As a result, out of a total of 6100 people who arrived from Tomsk (and plus 500-700 people transferred from other commandant's offices), by August 20, 2200 people remained alive. ..." [129, p. 162]

These are the lines from the report of the instructor of the Naryn City Party Committee to the West Siberian Regional Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks. Judging by the final statistics, the nightmare on Nazino Island was not at all something out of the ordinary. During the first re-registration of "special settlers", carried out in January 1932, a loss of **500**

thousand people was revealed, who died or fled (to certain death) in the taiga. That is why the author asks those readers who were jarred by the phrase about "cannibalistic power" not to be offended in vain. This is not a metaphor, but a simple statement of fact. The Bolshevik authorities deliberately and cold-bloodedly exchanged several million human lives for American tractor (tank) factories, for French aircraft engines, for German machine tools. In those years, Comrade Stalin, even in a nightmare, could not see July 3, 1941, when, clinking with a trembling jaw along the edge of a glass of water, he would be forced to turn to "brothers and sisters", and it was them - humiliated, robbed,

deceived - to name "citizens" and call to arms... The mass repressions of 1929-1933, along with simple, prosaic, "economic" tasks (to provide the growing industry with ultra-cheap labor and gratuitous agricultural products, to collect gold and currency for the purchase of Western technology) were aimed at solution to a very difficult problem. The new ruling class was filled from top to bottom with people who had personal experience. The experience of organizing uprisings, coups, partisan detachments, red-green "guards", etc. This experience and these people could not but disturb the party leadership.

And only after dispossession, collectivization, famine, Stalin and the company were able to breathe easy. Now they knew that for the "activists" who scooped out the porridge-zatirukha from the bowler hat of the starving people, there was no way back to the robbed people and never will be. Bound by the mutual guarantee of immeasurable villainy, they could now only dutifully plod along along the winding "party line".

In January 1934, Sergo Ordzhonikidze, dearly beloved by our "sixties", wrote to their even more beloved SM. Kirov: "... the cadres who went through the situation of 1932-1933 and withstood it were tempered like steel. I think that with them it will be possible to build a State that history has not yet known" [129].

Prophetic words. Deeply faithful. The history of Russia did not know this before. And in the old days, in old Russia, it was still necessary to look for such "cadres" who could daily unload children swollen with hunger into the bare steppe. Unfortunately, neither the author of the letter nor its addressee survived until June 1941 and therefore did not see how these "hardened cadres" behaved in the face of an armed enemy. And before that, in the conditions of a "peaceful respite" (which for the common people turned out to be much worse than an imperialist war), the new elite of the "proletarian state" was not so much tempered as, in the language of the steelworkers, let go.

"I got married in June 1929... Fabulous life, fabulous... An apartment on Manezhnaya Square, opposite the Kremlin. Six rooms... I went for dinner... We were transported in boats - it didn't get cold, it's close to the Kremlin, and our car had a green light everywhere... The dinners were delicious, the cooks were excellent, nine people were full of these dinners for two ... Half a kilo of butter and half a kilo of black caviar were always given for dinner ... Along with dinner, you could take gastronomy, sweets, alcohol ... Red, yellow, white vodka. In decanters... Wonderful

chops..." [130, p. 154] These are the memories of the wife. The wives are almost not even the boss - just the son of a former member of the Politburo, by that time already disgraced Kamenev. Kremlin chops, as a juicy metaphor for his future fate, he ate in a narrow home circle. The incumbent bosses "decayed morally" collectively and with

great brilliance. "The luxurious hall of the club was immersed in twilight. A large rotating ball suspended from the ceiling scattered a mass of bunnies around the hall, creating the illusion of falling snow. Men in uniforms and tuxedos and ladies in long evening gowns or operetta costumes danced to the sound of jazz. Many of the women were wearing masks and extremely picturesque costumes, borrowed from the dressing rooms of the Bolshoi Theatre. The tables were bursting with champagne, liqueurs and vodka ... Some colonel of the border troops

ecstasy: "This is life, guys / Thanks to Comrade Stalin for our happy childhood /" This is

how the famous Chekist defector Orlov (Feldbin) describes a ball in the NKVD club that took place in 1936. Let's be honest - Comrade Stalin did not dance in costumes from the Bolshoi Theater, and he saw the happy "childhood" of his colonels somewhat differently. So, on February 3, 1938, the Politburo adopted another resolution, which noted that "a number of arrested conspirators (Rudzutak, Rozengolts, Antipov, Mezhlauk, Karakhan, Yagoda, etc.) built themselves grandiose dachas-palaces of 15-20 rooms, where they lived in luxury and spent people's money, thus demonstrating their complete everyday decay and rebirth. Alas, Stalin's struggle with the degenerates and

degenerates in terms of effectiveness corresponded to attempts to pull himself out of the swamp by pulling his own hair. If not dachas, not palaces and not vodka, then what else could he offer his accomplices? The dream of a world revolution left with Trotsky, and even the Boss himself could not afford to offer the former village lumpen who had risen "from rags to riches" the idea of universal equality and fraternity. All he had to do was to shoot some "red boys" to incite others. Many years later, the surviving children and grandchildren of the repressed chiefs, in verse and prose, inspired the gullible descendants with the idea that the peak of the Bolshevik terror fell on the 37th year, and the main victims of the Great Massacre were the people's commissars and army commanders. If only... In 1937-1938, 1,345,000 people were

arrested by the NKVD, of which 681,000 were shot, 115,000 **died under torture during the "investigation" or died in prisons and camps.** Where was it possible to recruit so many people's commissars, Bolsheviks of the "Leninist guard" and Chekists of the "Dzerzhinsky school"? By the way, in the state security organs from October 1936 to August 1938, only 1862 employees were arrested for "counter-revolutionary crimes". Probably, we will not be much mistaken if we assume that for one "faithful Leninist" there were one hundred innocently ruined peasants, workers, engineers, doctors ... But the world is arranged in such a way that even a hundred thousand collective farmers cannot attract so much public attention, how much one heir of a member of the Politburo will attract.

By the beginning of 1939, the shooting of senior officials had declined sharply, but the repressions against the "true masters of their country" were on the rise. The year 1940 was a record year for the number of convicts - 2,300 thousand people, and in that year 57% of all those in the Gulag had sentences of less than 5 years, and "political", i.e. those convicted under the famous Leninist article 58 of the Criminal Code accounted for only 25-30% of the total number of repressed. Guided by normal human logic, one could assume that the remaining 70% were criminals. But it's not. Of course, there were also criminals, but the bulk of the Gulag prisoners were people who became victims of the criminal methods of leadership legalized by the Stalinist gang. They were imprisoned for being late to the machine for 30 minutes, for a drill broken due to inexperience (or due to unrealistic production rates), for the caterpillar of a new tank torn during tests, for being born in the "liberated" Eastern Poland or Bessarabia, for a distant foreign relative foolishly sent a postcard for not fulfilling the mandatory minimum of workdays.... And why did the "ordinary Soviet people" have to forget at

once about all the violence, outrages, madness of the Bolshevik regime? Just because the paragraph about "violations of socialist legality" of our textbook has ended, and the new one (the third war in two years) that began at dawn on Sunday will be described in another paragraph, and even under the name "domestic", and not simple, and the Great? Why do we still perceive as a sensational discovery the materials of the investigative files of Soviet generals repressed during the war years, almost in each of which there is a denunciation of how, in conversations over a glass of tea, officers "slanderosly claimed that the soldiers and commanders of the Red Army did not show stamina in battles" and are not interested in the war, because before the war, being workers and collective farmers, they lived poorly" [124].

On the eve of the war, in January 1941, 1,930 thousand convicts were kept in the Gulag camps, another 462 thousand people were in prisons, there were more than 1,200 thousand in the "special settlement". Total: 3.6 million. Well, the total result of the pre-war "seven-year plan" is 6 million who were behind bars in the period from 1934 to 1941 [129]. Not every European country had an adult population of such

numbers. The song was written about this: "I don't know another such country where a person breathes so freely."

By the way, about the songs. Let's interrupt for a while the heavy conversation about unimaginable horrors and remember about songs and movies.

Didn't wait

It is very difficult for a reader who in the post-war years was born and lived on Mira Street, next to the Mir club, in a house hung with posters "Peace to the world", to the song "Do Russians want wars?" pouring from a loudspeaker, it is very difficult to believe that that there was a time when completely different songs were in use in the Soviet Union. Convulsions of military psychosis shook Soviet society

from the first days of its existence. "We are kindling the fire of the world" - with these words the combatant song began, in the refrain of which it was stated that "from the taiga to the British seas, the Red Army is the strongest." "It is necessary to organize the work of the highest headquarters in such a way that the Red Army can fulfill its tasks in any

operational direction and in any sector of a possible future front. The boundaries of this front in the near future are determined by the boundaries of the entire continent of the Old World" - this is how M.V. expounded the military doctrine of the Red Army in the spring of 1921. Frunze, the future chief of the General Staff of the Red Army and Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the USSR [133]. The current chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic (L.D. Trotsky) at that time was developing a plan for the campaign of the 40,000th cavalry corps through Afghanistan, Punjab and Bengal to the shores of the Indian Ocean [134].

God does not give horns to a vigorous cow. In the 1920s, the Red Army had to limit itself to war songs alone. In the early 1930s, when Stalin desperately needed Western technology to revive the military industry, even songs of this kind were temporarily canceled. But when Europe, not without the influence of the clever intrigues of the Kremlin dictator, began to plunge into the abyss of the Great War, bloodthirsty rhetoric again filled all the pores of life.

They sang about the war, dreamed about it - in poetry and prose.

“Near Koenigsberg at dawn / we will be wounded with you ...”

These lines were written by K. Simonov at the very time when normal diplomatic and economic relations were maintained with Germany, and the Soviet Union even had a common border with East Prussia (the center of which is Koenigsberg) was not there yet! Probably the most well-known book of the pre-war years, A. Gaidar's story "Timur and his team", began with the following words: "For three months now, the commander of the armored division, Colonel Aleksandrov, has not been at home. He must have been at the front." The time of the story is summer, the beginning of school holidays. The year is either 1939 or 1940 (in the course of the action, Komsomol members celebrate the anniversary of the battles on Khasan). There was no "front" this summer. The armored train commanded by "Colonel Aleksandrov" could not get to Khalkhin Gol. There are no rails. But the children's writer's anticipation of the imminent war was so strong that he came up with this co

“The Soviet people not only know how, but, one might say, love to fight,” shouted from the rostrum of the XVIII Congress of the Party of Defense People's Commissar K.E. Voroshilov. “You must understand that the main idea of the Marxist doctrine is to extract the maximum benefit for communism in the face of huge conflicts within humanity ... The capitalist world is full of blatant abominations that can only be destroyed by the red-hot iron of holy war,” Comrade Kalinin, the head of the Soviet state, preached at the meeting employees of the apparatus of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR on May 20, 1941 [1, p. 444]. Yes, of course,

the "all-Union headman" did not decide anything, and they kept him only "for decency" - but this only confirms the fact that Kalinin's words fully corresponded to the intentions of the Boss himself. The main

character of the epoch-making film "The Great Citizen" (his prototype was SM Kirov) dreamed of "twenty years later, after a good war, to go out and look at the Soviet Union of some thirty or forty republics." And the modest major A.I. Samoilov, speaking at a meeting at the Political Directorate of the Red Army on May 14, 1940, said: “Our commanders will take the position of British officers in the world. So it should be and so it will be. We will teach the whole world...” [1, p. 425]

Nobody reprimanded Comrade Samoilov. No one doubted that "we will teach the whole world." There was some ambiguity in another question - with what and how should the Great Campaign begin?

"... The life of a Soviet city is passing peacefully ... Unexpectedly, the air forces of a neighboring state attack the USSR ... Soviet aviation receives a combat mission. Three squadrons are sent to the rear of the enemy country... The enemy's air forces are defeated, its military industry is paralyzed (is it three squadrons? - M.S.)... Soviet ground forces, using the success of aviation, break through the enemy's front... Soviet tanks and cavalry deliver a mortal blow to the enemy ... "

This is the synopsis for the film Deep Raid. Mostehfilm. Year of issue - 1937. "... the Soviet

border. A sudden raid by enemy aircraft... The Soviet tank group is given the task of crossing into the territory of the aggressor and destroying his main forces concentrated near the city of Ensburg. The enemy troops are commanded by General von Buhler... Soviet tanks cross the river and strike at the enemy's right flank. Von Bueller's troops were utterly defeated ... "

"Tankers". Lenfilm. Year of issue - 1939. It is worth noting that this year along the entire western border of the USSR (then it was the border with Poland, Latvia, Estonia) there were not and could not be any German "burgs", and among the Polish generals it would be difficult to find "von Bueller" .. .

"...Soviet intelligence agencies intercepted the order of the high command (that's right, there is nothing to wait until they start bombing us. - M.S.) of fascist Germany about crossing the Soviet border. Having blown up the tanks of the invading enemy in the minefields, our troops go on the offensive ... Thousands fly out to bomb the fascist airfields (this is the case, otherwise - three squadrons! - M.S.)

Soviet planes...

"Squadron No. 5". Kyiv film studio. 1939 The Nazi airfields were then bombed in one fell swoop (as they were two years ago in the film "Deep Raid"), but the enemy has become more insidious over the years and built an underground airfield! It is with him that the heroic squadron No. 5 is cracking down ...

“Well, what is all this for? the angry reader will grumble. “You never know what the filmmakers filmed, is this what determines the military plans of the

state ...” The role of “the most important of all arts” should not be underestimated. For the semi-literate village masses — namely, from this milieu hundreds of thousands of conscripts poured into the army twice a year — the white sheet of the movie screen became the main (if not the only) window to the “big world”. Nevertheless, the strategy of the future war is fixed in completely different documents. For example, in the top-secret, never intended for “mass consumption” plan to cover the mobilization and deployment of the Kyiv OVO [VIZH, 1996,

No. 4]. As you know, the pre-war plans for covering the western districts assumed the conduct of active hostilities already at the stage of mobilization, concentration and deployment of the Red Army.

In particular, the following tasks were set for the aviation of the Kiev Regional

Military District: “... a) successive strikes by combat aviation on established bases and airfields, as well as actions in the air, destroy enemy aircraft and from the very first days of the war gain air supremacy ... d)

destruction of railway bridges and junctions of Czestochowa, Katowice, Krakow, Kielce, as well as actions against enemy groupings to disrupt and delay the concentration and deployment of his troops ...”The

exact same tasks were set in the plans to cover other districts. And in the directive of the People's Commissar of Defense (on the basis of which the district cover plans were developed), the number of sorties that were allowed to be made in the first 15 days of the war was also

determined: “... 15 sorties for fighters, 10 sorties for short-range bombers and reconnaissance aircraft, bombers - 7 sorties ... ”[VIZH, 1996, No. 2] This is how the

Soviet command imagined the exertion of forces that would be required in order to “gain air supremacy from the very first days” in the war with Germany, and at the same time “disrupt and delay the deployment of enemy troops”:

- one sortie per day for a fighter; - two sorties in three days for front-line bombers; - one sortie in two days for long-range bomber aviation. This is how they were going to conquer Europe - with feeling, with sense, with arrangement. On even numbers, we bomb, on odd ones, we take a steam bath ... Even more remarkable details are

found in the December
(1940) "Plan for the Deployment of the Southwestern Front" [16]:

"...1st day of action. Two successive raids on enemy airfields located in the zone to a depth of 150-160 km. Forces: 46 bomber, 10 fighter regiments...

... on the 5th, 6th, 7th days of action, a blow is struck on bridges across the river. Vistula and railway junctions.

Forces: 37 bomber and 10 fighter regiments ... "Estimate the proportions - already on the first day of the war, four the bomber will be covered by only one fighter!

In other words, serious resistance from the Germans was simply not expected. Equally cool

plans were hatched at the headquarters of the Western OVO. Air Marshal Skripko recalls in his memoirs how in the early spring of 1941 he (at that time the commander of the 3rd long-range bomber aviation corps) was summoned to Minsk for a command post game. "... the game was dedicated to

the actions of the Air Force of the front in a front-line offensive operation ... Such a vital

issue as the organization of interaction between long-range and front-line bombers with fighters remained untouched. Under the terms of the game, we did not solve bombing missions either, and cover for the landing was provided by seizing air supremacy ... "[50] It is worth noting that according to the plans of the

South-Western Front, the transition to the offensive of ground forces was planned only "from the morning of the 30th day of mobilization" . It is worth noting that the plans themselves for covering mobilization and deployment began to be developed not in October 1939 - immediately after the emergence of a common line of contact with the Wehrmacht - but only in May 1941! Soviet "historians" emphasized this circumstance with particular zeal, apparently not realizing that

the lack of plans to cover up mobilization (in the presence of plans for an offensive to a depth of 300 km) demonstrates not the special peacefulness of the USSR, but the transcendent arrogance of the country's top military-political leadership. What did it expect? The fact that Hitler will patiently wait for this very "morning of the 30th day of mobilization" or, having noticed the operational deployment of the Red Army troops that has begun, will he write pitiful letters to Stalin and ask for help from the League of Nations?

Of course, in the formation of just such ideas about the nature of the upcoming war, the enthusiastic narcissism common to the entire Bolshevik worldview affected:

"Marx's teaching is omnipotent because it is true; we move both mountains and rivers, / the time for fairy tales has come in reality; there are no fortresses that the Bolsheviks cannot take." Stalin's personal guilt in such a disastrous underestimation of the enemy is also indisputable. But in fairness and fairness, this guilt should be shared with him by his closest henchmen.

Stalin is often compared to Genghis Khan. Any comparison is lame. It's lame on both legs at once. Genghis Khan appointed himself the leader in a pack of seasoned wolves. The environment that Stalin chose for himself was an incredible hybrid of a fat hog with a cowardly hare. Among several hundred

top commanders of the army and the NKVD (and each of them had bodyguards, personal weapons, secret agents) there was not a single one who would dare to raise a "micro-rebellion" or at least offer armed resistance to arrest. Exactly three people dared to passive resistance - escape: the head of the Far Eastern NKVD, Lyushkov, and the NKVD resident in Spain, Orlov (Feldbin), fled beyond the cordon, and Uspensky, the chief Chekist of Ukraine, hid on the run for several months. All the rest dutifully carried their heads to the chopping block, at best they put a bullet in their foreheads.

On June 2, 1937, speaking at a meeting of the Supreme Military Council, Stalin said about Gamarnik who shot himself: "If I were in his place, I would ask for a meeting with Stalin, first I would put him to bed, and then I would kill myself." What was behind these words? Mockery? Provocation? The cry of the tormented soul of an outstanding person who is tired of communicating with insignificant little people?

The bloody dwarf Yezhov was removed from his post as head of the NKVD on November 25, 1938. For a long 136 days he drank heavily, whined, complained about his fate, waited for something, until finally on April 10, 1939 he was placed in the terrible Sukhanov special prison of the NKVD. The favorite of the whole party and its largest theoretician (at least, this is how Lenin characterized him) N.I. Bukharin wrote 43 letters to Stalin from prison. All letters are about one thing - about love. "All my dreams of recent times have gone only to cling to the leadership, to you in particular ... I began to have the same feeling for you as for Ilyich, a feeling of family closeness, tremendous love ... I fully recognize myself as your ... "Sentenced to death for crimes that he obviously did not commit, our "party favorite" writes to the Boss: "I kneel before the Motherland, the party and ask for mercy ..." [125] Commander of the 1st rank,

Yakir, commander of the troops of the Kiev military district, in the May Day "holiday" order of 1937 crossed out the mention of Stalin. Six weeks after that, from a prison cell, he sent a letter to Stalin: "Dear, close comrade Stalin! I die with words of love for you. Dear reader, does it seem to you that we have deviated far from

the main topic? Not at all. It was long-term communication with yakirs, ezhovs and other Bukharians that finally caused the future Supreme Commander-in-Chief to have a serious illness - the "dizziness from success" so theoretically condemned by him. That is, at the level of consciousness, he understood everything and did a lot of things right: he created a huge, motorized army, personally delved into the problems of its technical re-equipment, personally worked with designers and directors, generals and intelligence officers. But in the depths of his soul, the confidence grew that in the whole world there would not be such a force that would try to impose its will on him - the earthly demigod. Fighting from year to year with "enemies" capable of only plaintive whining, Stalin involuntarily transferred this experience to his fight with his Berlin competitor. Judging by the content of the pre-war plans, he counted (more precisely, he hoped without any calculation) that he would always be allowed to "control the process" undividedly. Alas, Hitler was paranoid, but not a masochist, he did not take off his pants before the exemplary flogging ...

The Polish and Finnish campaigns greatly contributed to the pernicious self-delusion. Their harmful effect on the Red Army was exceptionally great. Through the efforts of Soviet-party propaganda, the almost bloodless "victory" over Poland, defeated by the Germans, was presented as a model, according to which the Great Campaign would be deployed in the future. Namely: the liberated peoples greet the workers' and peasants' army with flowers, the enemy soldiers "turn their bayonets against their bourgeois government", clouds of red-star planes overshadow the sky with their wings, and so on. Everything is like in the movies.

"We won't have to fight anywhere / With those who grew up in struggle and need," Margarita Aliger prophesied from the pages of the main army newspaper ("Red Star" dated 09/21/1939). The most popular in those years, Konstantin Simonov,

dreamed of the time "... amazing
liberations of western,
southern, polar, tropical and
overseas Belarus and

Ukraine ..." Vsevolod Vishnevsky enthusiastically writes to film director E. Dzigan: "Now in front of the colossus of the Red Army, exceeding the forces of Germany in faithful three, if not more times, many will back aw

Yes, and what do you want from frivolous poets, if on November 7, 1939, People's Commissar of Defense Voroshilov himself, in an order read out in all units and subdivisions, described the Polish campaign in this style: "... the Polish troops were defeated by the rapid onslaught of the Red Army ... the Polish state, whose rulers have always shown so much arrogance and bragging, at the first military clash shattered like an old rotten cart ... "

Another people's commissar, the railway one, did not stand aside either. Member of the Politburo Kaganovich, speaking at the next party aktiv on October 4, 1939, ornate: "Just think about how many years tsarism fought to annex Lviv - 4 years of imperialist war, under the Przemyśl fortress three corps lay down, and our troops took this territory without great sacrifices..." [139]

For the sake of truth, it should be noted that there was still such a person in the leadership who tried to reverse these "hat-captive" moods. Speaking on April 17, 1940 at a meeting of the command

composition of the Red Army, dedicated to the results of the war with Finland, Stalin said

[140]: "... we were terribly damaged by the Polish campaign, it spoiled us ... our army did not immediately understand that the war in Poland was a military walk, not a war ... Here, with this psychology that our army is invincible, with boasting, which are terribly developed among us, it is necessary finish..."

Gold words. Yes, only the trouble is that even more dangerous conclusions for the combat effectiveness of the army were drawn from the experience of the Finnish war. Contrary to popular misconception, Stalin was very, very complacent and described the disgracefully failed campaign against Helsinki in the most rosy terms:

"... why couldn't they strike from all sides and pinch Finland? We did not set such a serious task, because the war in Finland is very difficult ... We knew that Peter I fought for 21 years to recapture all of Finland from Sweden ... we knew that Catherine II waged war for two years and nothing special achieved ... We knew all this stuff and believed that, perhaps, the war with Finland would last until August or September ... the war ended after 3 months and 12 days only because our army did a good job ... "In a word - Party plans, it turns out, were fulfilled and even

overfulfilled. Memory once again failed Comrade Stalin, and he forgot that, in accordance with the Directive of the People's Commissar of Defense No. 0205 of November 17, 1939, it was planned to defeat the Finnish army in 10-15 days, and with the forces of the Leningrad Military District alone [1, p. 149]. Further, Stalin lovingly, purely paternally, scolded some comrades: "... since Comrade Kovalev is a

good fighter, since he is a good hero of the Civil War and achieved fame in the era

of the Civil War, it is very difficult for him to free himself from the experience of the Civil War, which is completely insufficient..." and praised the entire Red Army as a whole: "... our army has become strong with both feet on the rails of a new, real Soviet modern army. This is the main plus of the experience that we learned in the fields of Finland ... "Well, the final conclusion that the assembled commanders heard simply rang with triumphant copper:

“The main thing in our victory is that we defeated the technique, tactics and strategy of the advanced states of Europe, whose representatives were teachers of the Finns ... We defeated not only the Finns, we defeated their European teachers - we defeated the German defensive technique, we defeated the English defensive technique, the French defensive technique was defeated ... "In short - a

complete banzai! In order for precisely such conclusions to be fixed in the minds, a waterfall of orders and medals, new ranks and new appointments fell on the army - primarily on its

command staff. It was after the end of the Finnish war, on June 4, 1940, that general ranks were introduced. Newspapers printed long lists for several weeks - only 949 newly minted generals! The highest award of the country - the title of Hero of the Soviet Union - was awarded to 412 people (four times more than will be awarded for the courage shown in the battle for Moscow!). Everyone should have understood that we defeated the most powerful enemy that could be, and now the Red Army would bend even anyone into a ram's horn. Unrestrained boasting reached the point that the Finnish campaign was ordered to be considered the biggest event of the world war, unlike some skirmishes in France or North Africa...

not a war, but a game of spillikins,” Kalinin preached on May 20, 1941, “but for such a war as, for example, the war with Finland ...” [1, p. 443]

The arrogance and aplomb of narcissistic upstarts did not leave the Kremlin rulers until the very last minute. On June 16, 1941, they declared (through Molotov's first deputy comrade Vyshinsky) to the British Chargé d'Affaires in the USSR that “there is no reason for the Soviet Union to show any concern. Others may worry” [69, p. 743]. A few days earlier, Molotov's other deputy for the Foreign Ministry, S.A. Lozovsky literally reprimanded the US Ambassador Steingardt, who poked his head in with proposals to strengthen interstate relations on the eve of “the greatest crisis that the USSR will experience in the next 2-3 weeks.” “The Soviet Union is very calm about all kinds of rumors about an attack on its borders,” the

Comrade Lozovsky. "If there were such people who tried to do this, then the day of the attack on the USSR would be the most unfortunate in the history of the country that attacked the USSR" [69, p. 727].

So the army was prepared for "such a war", which it will start when it wants and finish as soon as it considers it profitable for itself. So the meeting in June 1941 with the Wehrmacht, which was very different from the Finnish or Polish army both in numbers and technical equipment, became for the fighters and commanders of the Red Army the very one that paralyzed the mind and will, "surprise".

Second front in the rear

The negative consequences of the "liberation campaigns" had another component. Almost completely bypassed by the attention of domestic historians, in terms of the degree of influence on the course of hostilities, it turned out to be much more significant than the mythical "surprise attack."

The war started in a foreign land. Remember, dear reader, the geographical names that flashed in the descriptions of hostilities in the first three parts of our book: Imatra, Sortavala, Lahdenpohja, Alakurtti, Merkinen, Ahtu, Indra, Sidra, Valpa, Bransk, Krystynopol, Zholkiew, Radzivilov, Shelvov, Stoyanov, Oplutsko ... In such places, Ryazan peasants could be raised to the Patriotic War? Yes, and if only Ryazan ...

Sandalov, in two lines of his monograph, casually remarks that "a large number of indigenous inhabitants of the Central Asian republics who had little or no knowledge of the Russian language" arrived to staff the 14th mechanized corps (i.e. tank troops, the army's elite) [79]. What kind of

fatherland were these children of the mountains and steppes to protect, by the will of fate abandoned in the swamps of Eastern Poland, temporarily (from the 39th to the 45th year) called "Western Belarus"?

But the "liberated territories" are not only forests, fields and rivers. This is a multi-million, multi-ethnic local population, with whom even in less than two years (since September 1939) the party and the NKVD managed to do a huge amount of educational work. In some cases, it would be more correct to call this work "re-educational". In September

1939 The Red Army was greeted with flowers. These are not inventions of "red propaganda". The Ukrainian population of Galicia and Volyn, who found themselves in pre-war Poland in the position of second-class people in their native land, accepted with joy and hope the reunion with their half-brothers from the eastern lands. As for the popular rumor about the mass executions and the Holodomor of 1933, it seemed to many residents of Western Ukraine too terrible to be true. With no less excitement, the Chekists looked at the new

reality. Sudoplatov, without a shadow of hesitation, writes in his memoirs: "... in Lvov, the atmosphere was strikingly different from the state of affairs in the Soviet part of Ukraine. In Lvov, the Western capitalist way of life flourished, wholesale and retail trade was in the hands of private traders, who were soon to be liquidated ... "[162]

Eliminated quickly and decisively. Forced collectivization in the countryside, "nationalization" (i.e. extrajudicial requisition of private property) in cities, dissolution of all and every political, social, cultural and educational organizations, persecution of the church and believers (especially Catholics and Uniates associated with the West) . The vigilance of the "Chekists" reached the point that they were not too lazy to re-read thousands of writings of graduates of Polish schools - in order to identify "very smart and literate" - whose families were the first to be loaded into freight cars leaving for Siberia [129]...

According to the most minimal estimates, more than 400 thousand residents of the annexed territories were deported to Siberia and Kazakhstan simply by decision of local "administrative bodies". Sometimes - presumably, in the form of black humor - the natives of Poland, who had never heard of Trotsky, were taken away from their homes on the basis of the Order of the NKVD of the USSR of July 30, 1937, as "members of the families of Trotskyists and

saboteurs" [161]. Those exiled to Siberia, one might say, were lucky. Most of them survived. "Only" 16% of the deportees died from the inhuman conditions of transportation and living in dead places. The fate of others was much more tragic. So, by a special resolution of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks, wi

Stalin, Voroshilov, Molotov, Mikoyan, Kalinin and Kaganovich, in March 1940, almost 25 thousand people were sentenced to death in absentia, "without summoning those arrested and without bringing charges", almost 25 thousand people were captured: captured officers of the Polish army (most of whom did not one shot at the Red Army), as well as civilian officials in Eastern Poland.

Reason: "... while in the camps, they conduct anti-Soviet agitation (in Polish? among guards? - MS). Each of them is just waiting for release in order to be able to actively engage in the struggle against the Soviet regime ... "[16] In total, from September

1939 to February 1941, 92,500 people were arrested by the NKVD / NKGB in the western regions of Ukraine and Belarus. Among them: 41 thousand Poles, 23 thousand Jews, 21 thousand Ukrainians, 7.5 thousand Belarusians [160]. There was no discrimination based on nationality, everyone "got it". In particular, in Western Belarus, the Chekists managed to identify some kind of "Jewish-fascist organization of a pro-English orientation" ...

According to the same scenario, but only in an even shorter timeframe, the Sovietization of the Baltics took place. The only difference was that while in occupied Eastern Poland it was mainly the prosperous minority who suffered from the "profound social transformations", in the Baltic countries the transition to Soviet money, Soviet prices and Soviet wages led to the impoverishment of the majority of workers, artisans, employees, and peasants.

In the weeks leading up to the war, the scale of repression increased significantly. By June 1941, the total number of those arrested in the western regions of Ukraine and Belarus had grown to 107 thousand people. In Latvia with a population of two million, on June 14–17, 1941 alone, 9,156 people were repressed (arrested or deported), and a total of 49,331 people were deported from the three Baltic countries [155, 160, 161]. Note that these figures are also the minimum

found in the literature. As a result of such a thorough "cleansing", the rear area of future military operations began to turn into an active front, and even BEFORE

June 22, 1941. "With the onset of the spring of 1941, the situation near the border sharply escalates due to frequent incidents. Unarmed and alone

we were not allowed to go anywhere ... in the first company of our battalion, a patrol of two soldiers once disappeared. A few days later, one of them was found pierced by the bayonet of his own rifle and pinned to the ground, while the second was not

found at all ... "These are lines from the memoirs of L.V. Irina, cadet of the training company of the Grodno fortified area. But the Hero of the Soviet Union F.F. Archipenko (in those days - a young pilot of the 17th IAP) recalls how "in the spring of 1941, on the instructions of the commissar in one of the villages near Kovel, I happened to read a report dedicated to the Red Army Day ... During the report, several shots were heard under the windows. .. The atmosphere around was quite tense, and the thought came that it would be nice to leave here as soon as possible while alive. Although I was left to spend the night, I insisted on leaving and went to Kovel in a cab, keeping the pistol ready in my bosom all the way ... before the war, commanders from other units often disappeared in those places and, being outside military territory, I

had to be vigilant .. ." [59] The reports of the headquarters of the internal troops of the NKVD of the pre-war period speak of dozens of defeated (or being in "operational development") armed bandit formations, of almost constant skirmishes, sabotage, seizures of weapons and explosives. The situation was especially tense in the western regions of Ukraine, where partisan detachments of the OUN (Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists, established in 1929) operated, which had accumulated considerable combat experience over the years of the terrorist struggle against the Polish authorities. It is noteworthy that the greatest activity of Bandera was observed in the Tarnopol region, i.e. exactly where the field command post of the headquarters of t

The Latvian paramilitary organization "Aizsargi" (created back in 1919, by 1940 had up to 40 thousand people), combat groups of the "Lithuanian Defense Guard", the Estonian "Kaitseliit" and others were actively preparing to strike at the rear of the Red Army. In a report dated May 21, 1941, German military intelligence stated with a feeling of deep satisfaction: "The uprisings in the Baltic

countries are prepared, and one can reliably rely on them. Underground insurgency in its

development progresses so much that it causes certain difficulties to keep its participants from premature actions ... "[155]

Carefully made by the joint efforts of the Stalinists and the Nazis, the "delayed action mine" exploded on June 22, 1941. Marshal

Moskalenko writes in his memoirs that the first shots of the war for him were the shots of Ukrainian nationalists, who in Lutsk fired at his car at dawn on June 22. A.T. Ilyin (at that time a junior lieutenant, 5th Panzer Division, 3rd MK) recalls how in the early morning of June 22 he was sent to clarify the situation to the division headquarters, in the Lithuanian city of Alytus: "... the crowd parted in both directions and we drove at full speed. But when we passed, then from the crowd they began to shoot at us from machine guns and already knocked out our motorcycle in front of the barracks ... "[83]

In the very first minutes of the war, militants of the anti-Soviet underground blew up a telephone exchange in Bialystok (and the main communication lines of the 10th Army went through this switch), a power plant in Kobrin, and cut off electricity and water in Brest [79]. All participants in the first battles in Belarus unanimously testify that German aviation delivered targeted strikes at command posts, warehouses, and echelons with the latest technology. Is it necessary to prove that this became possible only because hundreds of informants from among the local residents helped

German intelligence? The situation that developed in the first days of the war in the Baltic states cannot be called anything other than a large-scale armed rebellion. Already on June 24, 1941, before the advanced units of the Wehrmacht entered Kaunas, a certain "Lithuanian commandant's office" headed by colonel of the former Lithuanian army Bobialis established control over the city. One eyewitness testifies:

"... the leaders of Lithuania hurried to escape in cars first, and the police authorities followed them, thereby untying the hands of the counter-revolutionary gangs in Lithuania ... Kaunas and all of Lithuania in general were without civil authorities for several days. On June 23 and 24, the counter-revolution organized fighting squads, even attracting 5th grade schoolboys..." [155, p. 386]

Escape from Riga is more difficult - the city stands on the shore of the sea bay. Perhaps that is why in the capital of Latvia erupted

real street fighting. In the "Brief Description of the Combat Operations of the 5th Motorized Rifle Regiment of the NKVD Troops", the situation in the city is as follows: "...

hostile elements caused panic in the rear of the army, demoralized the work of headquarters, government and Soviet institutions ... Enemies installed on the bell towers of churches, towers, attics and in the windows of houses, machine guns, machine guns and fired at the streets, buildings of the headquarters of the North-Western Front, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia, the telegraph office, the station ... **tank guns**" (**underlined** by me. — M.S.)... On the night of June 24 (troops of the German Army Group "North" occupied

Riga only on June 30), a group of rebels broke into the house where workers of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Latvia lived. The scale of this night battle can be judged by the fact that "during the battle, 128 attackers were killed, 457 were taken prisoner" [155, p. 404]. The fire of rebellion raged in Ukraine. And not only in its western

regions. So, in the description of the combat operations of the 32nd Panzer Division we read: "... by the evening of 6.7.41. the division approached Starokonstantinov, but it was not possible to enter the city, as there was panic and unrest in the city" [8]. Starokonstantinov is located in the Proskurov (now Khmelnytsky) region. This is the "old Soviet" part of Ukraine. And even there, the "riots" turned out to be so strong that the commander of a tank (!) division did not dare to enter the city.

At the same time, in the regional center itself, as Mikhailov, head of the Political Propaganda Department of the South-Western Front, Mikhailov reported, "after the panic departure from the city of district and regional leaders, a power plant was blown up and a water supply system was destroyed. Our units that retreated to Proskurov were left without electricity and water..." [68] The main events unfolded in Lvov, the historical center of Galicia. Fighting in the city began almost on the very first day of the war. Here is how the commissar of the 8th mechanized corps N.K. describes the events of June 24. Popel:

"The motorcycle regiment had to perform an unusual task for it - to fight in the attics. It was there that observation and command posts of enemy sabotage groups were equipped (thus, obeying internal self-censorship, Popel calls

Bandera. - M.S), their firing points and ammunition depots. The enemy controlled our every movement, but we did not see him, and it was not easy to get to him. The fights were fierce in nature ... It is impossible to understand where ours are, where the enemies are - the uniform is the same for everyone, Red Army. It was not easy to put things in order on the central highway of Lvov. The element of flight dominated the people..." [105]

On the morning of June 30, 1941, armed detachments of Ukrainian nationalists, supported by units of the 17th Wehrmacht Army, completely captured the city. On the same day, the leaders of the OUN, S. Bandera and J. Stetsko, who arrived in Lviv, announced the creation of an "independent conciliar Ukraine." True, it soon became clear that the Germans needed the OUN just as the Polish gentry needed Grishka Otrepiev - only as a "pretext for strife and war." Enraged by the "arbitrariness" of the Ukrainian leaders, Hitler ordered the arrest of Bandera and Stetsko. A large group of leaders of the self-proclaimed republic was shot by the Germans. The split of the OUN into "Banderites" and "Melnikovites", which had already begun in 1940, intensified. Bandera's supporters began a guerrilla war against the invaders, while the Germans entrusted Melnik's detachments in the forefront of the advancing Wehrmacht units to enter Kyiv. But that is another story...

Let's go back to the tragic June 1941. One of the few things that the "chekists" managed to do, despite the "element of flight" that had taken possession of everyone, was what the official reports of the NKVD called "carrying out operations in the 1st category". On July 12, 1941, the head of the prison department of the NKVD of Ukraine, captain of state security A.F. Filippov reported to Moscow:

"... 2466 people left the prisons of the Lviv region in the 1st category ... All the prisoners who left in the 1st category were buried in pits dug in the cellars of prisons, in the city of Zlochev - in the garden."

The report also revealed some shortcomings in the work (probably caused by the same "element of flight"), namely:

"...local bodies of the NKGB...for the most part, operations in the 1st category were assigned to prison workers, remaining on the sidelines, and since this happened at the time of retreat under

enemy fire, then not everywhere the prison workers were able to more carefully bury the corpses and disguise them outwardly "
[158].

Buried very carelessly. An eerie stench of corpses decomposing in the 30-degree heat hung over Lvov. It was completely impossible to work in the prison area without gas masks. Goebbels's office later published a whole book of letters from German soldiers, in which they talked about nailed to the walls, mutilated, quartered bodies found inside the Lvov prison. Then Soviet propaganda for five decades in a row vehemently denied the very fact of the murder of prisoners ... The prisons of the Lvov region were no exception to the general rule. The mass

extermination of prisoners (including those under investigation, whose guilt before the Soviet authorities was not proven even according to the laws in force at that time!) Was widespread. So, judging by the report of Captain Filippov, in the Drohobych region, 1101 people "departed" according to the 1st category, in Stanislav region - 1000, in Tarnopol region - 674, in Rivne region - 230, in Volyn region - 231 ... [158]

In the western regions of Belarus, they did not have time to carry out such a massive massacre - the Wehrmacht was advancing there too quickly. But east of Minsk, the NKVD continued to work. Comrade Glinka, the military prosecutor of Vitebsk, already known to the reader, writes in his report:

"... state security sergeant, member of the CPSU (b) Priemyshev June 24 brought 916 prisoners from Glubokoe prison to Vitebsk

(estimate the number of prisoners in the prison of a provincial county town. - M.S.), of which more than 500 people were under investigation. On the way, this Priemyshev at different times shot 55 people in two steps, and in a place near Ulla during a raid by an enemy plane (as in the text - one plane. - M.S.) he ordered the convoy, which was 67 people, to shoot the rest ... He explains his actions by the fact that the prisoners allegedly wanted to escape and shouted: "Long live Hitler!" [68]. And in the midst of this bloody madness we found ourselves in the first days and

watch of the war of the family of commanders of the Red Army.

Commander families. One of the most terrible pages of the beginning of the war. No one is talking about the advance organized evacuation

taken care of. Moreover, the party "took care" to stop all manifestations of personal initiative in this matter. *"... At the bureau of the regional party committee, we considered the decisions of some border district party committees on the expulsion from the CPSU (b) of those who began to send their families to our rear facilities ..."*

These are lines from the memoirs of Belchen-ko, a former boss Directorate of the NKGB of Bialystok [62].

Let's stop. Let's estimate. Let us try to remember what it is like to be expelled from the Party in an era of "steady intensification of the class struggle." And why, dear comrades? Is there even a single line in the charter forbidding a party member to send a child to Tambov on vacation in the summer? Nevertheless, such desires were resolutely suppressed. And not only in Bialystok. Let's open Sandalov's book again:

"... On June 19, 1941, an expanded plenum of the regional party committee was held ... At the plenum, the first secretary of the regional committee, comrade. Tupitsyn drew attention to the tension in the international situation and the increased threat of war. He called for increased vigilance... To the questions of the plenum participants whether it is possible to send families from Brest to the east, the secretary of the regional committee replied that this should not be done so as not to arouse undesirable moods..." [79] That's it . War is on the threshold, but "the indestructible Red

Army will respond to the first blow of the enemy with a triple annihilating blow." And the one who even for a second doubted this, that coward, alarmist and enemy. Such people are not taken to the communists. However, the party authorities blamed the army authorities for everything. The secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party (b) of Latvia, J. Kalberzin, reported to Moscow that "thanks to the unacceptable and incomprehensible behavior of the headquarters of the Baltic Special Military District, the families of party and Soviet workers were evacuated at the very last moment, when the "fifth column" had already come out and a rifle was going on the streets and machine-gun fire" [112]. All this long preface is not to justify the violation of the oath and the actual

desertion. God is the judge of them all, but it turned out that everywhere the commanders of the Red Army **abandoned their soldiers and took up saving their wives and children**. This cannot be justified - each commander who abandoned his unit condemned to death

or the shame of the captivity of thousands of his subordinates. But how can one not understand people whose loved ones ended up in cities and towns engulfed in "riots" of such force that even tank divisions could hardly escape from there. Both sides of the war, which began at dawn on June 22, acted beyond mercy. The terror of Bandera and the Aizsargs was in no way inferior to the terror of the NKVD in its cruelty. Both of them did not want to distinguish between an armed enemy and a young child. And the bombs that fell in abundance from the blackened sky on the barracks and military camps, all the more did not distinguish between right and wrong. At that damned time, in the absence of a general and clear procedure for evacuation, every commander, every Soviet

worker acted to the best of his conscience and his capabilities. Someone limited himself to "rushing to check the rear", put his wife and child in a freight train leaving to the east and returned to the unit. Someone was loading a *"tall ebony sideboard"* into an ammo truck. The chairman of the Vitebsk City Council, as you remember, loaded barrels of beer into his car ... I have no doubt - Stalin's voluntary lawyers will say in this case that the timely evacuation of the families of the command staff from the zone of future hostilities was not carried out in order "to not give Hitler a reason to attack ". To argue

on this topic is stupid and, frankly, tired. Tens of thousands of wagons with people, tanks, guns, ammunition raced westward, disrupting traffic schedules on all railways of the Soviet Union. What other "reasons" did Hitler need? The scale of the strategic deployment of the Red Army that had begun was so great that Stalin did not even try to hide it. Instead, on June 13, 1941, in the famous TASS Report, a very clumsy, foolishly calculated attempt was made to give a reassuring explanation for Hitler:

"... the current summer gatherings of the Red Army reserve and the upcoming maneuvers are aimed at nothing more than training the reserve and checking the operation of the railway apparatus ..."

In such a situation, the departure to the east (and it was possible also to the south - to the resorts of the Crimea and the Caucasus) of several thousand women and children would not add or subtract anything. No, here the indifference to the fates and feelings of people, usual for the Stalinist regime, manifested itself. Although

Stalin can also be understood: he himself buried two wives who died untimely, the first wife of the "all-Union headman" Kalinin and the second wife of Marshal Budyonny were in the camps, the brother of L. Kaganovich was forced to commit suicide - and nothing, those who remained at liberty worked tirelessly hands And if Stalin did not spare his closest associates, then why would he take care of the families of some colonels and captains? So, thanks to

the dialectical interaction of the wise internal and invariably peaceful foreign policy of the Soviet state, employed in 1939-1940. the territories of Eastern Poland, Lithuania, Latvia turned into a trap for the Red Army. It is no coincidence that this constant motive sounds in the memoirs of the participants in the first battles: "Everyone wanted to cross our old state border of 1939 as quickly as possible ... for some reason it seemed that it would be safer behind it, since the Germans would not dare to move further." Alas, the Germans "took a chance", and the

Red Army withdrew beyond the "old border", having lost almost half of the regular rifle divisions, most of the tank troops, the best, most combat-ready part of the aviation.

"And all of you, fools, go..."

Speaking of "readiness", or rather, the reasons for the psychological unpreparedness of the country and the army for a big war, one cannot help but recall the wild "squiggles" of the USSR's foreign policy. Long before the famous novel by D. Orwell was written, the Stalinist leadership clearly demonstrated to the whole world such fundamental principles as "peace is war, truth is a lie", etc. After Hitler came to power in

Germany, the theme of the fascist threat became dominant in all official propaganda. By the way, it was precisely "links with the Gestapo" that were accused of both party bosses and military leaders, brought by Stalin to the famous "Moscow trials" of 1936-1937. On July 31, 1939, Pravda wrote: "The culprits and instigators of the second imperialist war are present.

This fascism is a criminal and dirty offspring of post-war imperialism..." Criminal and dirty... Exactly

52 days after the

publication of this article, on September 22, 1939, in Brest, captured by the Germans, a joint parade of the Red Army and the Wehrmacht takes place, which is received by General Guderian and brigade commander Krivosheev (a fighter of the international brigades and, moreover, a Jew by nationality). October 31, 1939 the head of the government of the USSR V.M. Molotov said from the rostrum of the Supreme Soviet verbatim the following:

"... the ideology of Hitlerism, like any other ideological system, can be recognized or denied, this is a matter of political views ... it is not only senseless, but also criminal to wage such a war as the war for the destruction of Hitlerism, covered with a false flag of the struggle for democracy ..." Like this. It is senseless and criminal to fight against Hitlerism. It was the late autumn of 1939 outside. By this time, everyone already knew what happens to those who criminally deviate from the party line ... November 7, 1939 in all companies, batteries and ships was read out (and published in all newspapers) the holiday order of the People's Commissar of Defense of the USSR No. 199 : "... the Anglo-French aggressors,

not showing the will for peace, are doing everything to intensify the war, to spread it to other countries ... The Treaty of Friendship and Border between the USSR and Germany is built on a solid foundation of mutual interests, and in this his mighty force..."

Finally, on November 30, 1939, in the form of a "response to the questions of the editor of the Pravda newspaper," the Host himself explained: with whom and against whom we are now friends. In his favorite manner - harshly, with constant repetitions - Stalin minted:

"... it was not Germany that attacked France and England, but France and England attacked Germany, taking responsibility for the current war ... the ruling circles of England and France rudely rejected both Germany's peace proposals and the Soviet Union's attempts to achieve a speedy end war. These are the facts..."

Before the working people of the Land of Soviets had time to come to their senses from such "pirouettes" in the invariably peaceful foreign policy of their native party, a new war began.

From mid-November 1939, a heart-rending howl arose in all the newspapers: "Finland is located incorrectly! Too close to Leningrad! The cradle of the revolution is under threat!"

On November 26, six artillery shells exploded at the location of the Soviet frontier post near the village of Mainila, as a result of which four soldiers were killed and 9 were wounded. On

November 27, the Finnish side handed over a response note to the Soviet leadership, in which it was reported that, according to the observation of the Finnish border guards, the firing gun was on Soviet territory. In full accordance with the spirit and letter of international law, Finland proposed the establishment of a joint bilateral commission to investigate the circumstances of this incident. What started

here ... "Destroy the vile gang!" "Raging dogs will be destroyed!" "Sweep the Finnish adventurers off the face of the earth!" These are the headlines of Pravda and Izvestia. So to speak, prose. Poems were also

printed: "Bloody jesters! Enough of you grimacing! It's time to close your vile farce! We will not allow you to mock the corpses of workers and peasants in a boorish way! [Izvestia, 11/29/1939] On November 30, 1939, the Red Army crossed the Soviet-Finnish border. On the same day, Soviet aviation bombed the central districts of Helsinki. The railway station was on fire, the metropolitan university was on fire. There were many corpses of killed Finnish work

The next day, the Pravda newspaper wrote: "... The Red Army will be able to deal a crushing blow not only to the Finnish booger, but also to those behind whose back this booger is hiding ..." On December 2, with a bashful note - "radio interception, translation from Finnish" - in the same Pravda, a huge, full page, "Declaration of the People's Government of the Finnish Democratic Republic" was published. From this declaration, the Soviet working people learned that their class brothers in Finland had revolted against the yoke of the "White Finnish Mannerheim gangs." From that moment on, no one even remembered about the "defense of Leningrad". The next task was formulated as follows:

"... bring the banner of the Finnish Democratic Republic to Helsinki and hoist it on the roof of the presidential palace - to the delight of the working people and to the fear of the enemies of the people."

On December 3, Pravda no longer called for beating the "Finnish booger." She distorted herself to statements that there is simply no war:

"... The USSR is not waging war against Finland, but, fulfilling a mutual assistance agreement with the People's Government of Finland, it is fighting against the White Guard government of Helsinki ... The

Red Army will fulfill its liberation task and help the working people of Finland to restore peace and tranquility in the country in a short time. .." It is noteworthy that this phrase

almost verbatim repeated the text of the joint German-Soviet communique of September 18, 1939, which stated that "the task of the Soviet and German troops is to restore order and tranquility in Poland, violated by the collapse of the Polish state, and help the people of Poland..." [Pravda, 09/19/1939]

What follows is well known. In the short term, it failed. The desperate resistance of the Finnish army, the terrible frosts, the harsh reaction of the West forced an early cessation of hostilities. And what? On March 29, 1940, Comrade Molotov, without batting an eyelid, declared at a session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR: "In connection with the agreement between the USSR and Finland (i.e., the "White Guard government of Helsinki." - M.S.) the question arose of self-dissolution The people's government, which he carried out ... "Molotov was

lucky with this "government". It was necessary - it was self-proclaimed, it became superfluous - it immediately dissolved itself. Well, what about people? Tens of thousands of Red Army soldiers who fell in the snow-white fields near Vyborg - are they "self-resurrected" according to Molotov? All this "vile farce" took place in front of the whole people. We will not speak for the whole people, but some of its representatives have already perfectly understood what lies ahead for them.

"When the USSR is ready for war, they will announce to you fools - let's go liberate the brothers of England and Germany - and all of you, fools, will go." This

is how - simply, figuratively, precisely - the Red Army soldier Zyuzin, an ordinary soldier of the 337th separate

anti-aircraft artillery battalion of the Arkhangelsk Military District. It was 37 days before the start of the big war, May 15, 1941 [1, p. 450].

And all of you, fools, will go... Why are we so surprised when we stumble upon facts that testify that not everyone was fools, not everyone was in a hurry to go to the slaughter for the sake of "extracting the maximum benefit for communism", not everyone dreamed of "good war" for the liberation of the next "brothers" from normal, human life?

Is it so unbelievable the assumption that among the fighters and commanders of Boldin's cavalry-mechanized group (the fantastic defeat of which was discussed in part 2) there were also participants in that September (1939) "friendship parade" in Brest? Couldn't such simple questions have crossed their minds: "What do we care about this new fight for the redistribution of booty between Hitler and Stalin? And how long will the enemy, who must be defeated in the struggle for another just cause, be considered an enemy - or will Molotov change his mind again in a couple of weeks?

Ordinary Soviet people had to answer these questions not within the framework of a television "talk show", not at a debate, and not in a secret voting booth. Completely distorted, fooling itself, the authorities demanded that they give their lives. The one and only. Give immediately and forever.

At any cost

War veteran Colonel T.G. Ibatullin in his book [74] writes:

"The morale of a participant in hostilities depends on answers primarily to three questions:

- what is the meaning of war, is it fair and legal? - Is my commander able to organize the battle in such a way as to complete the task with minimal losses? - am I confident

in my own preparation for action in a combat situation? The answer to the first question

is determined by the domestic and foreign policy pursued by the top leadership of the country. About this policy and its moral and psychological results, we

discussed in previous chapters. But the answers to the second and third questions do not depend on the "high government spheres", but on the company foreman, on the battalion commander and division commander. Yes, and to the third question, too, since it is impossible to prepare for participation in hostilities in the conditions of a native collective farm. It is the training of personnel that is the most important component of the statutory duties of army commanders at all levels. Was the commanding staff of the Red Army of the 1941 model capable of fulfilling these

duties? The level of professional training of the command staff of the Red Army, the quality of military training of ordinary soldiers - all this is a topic for a separate, serious study. Specialists who take the trouble to study this problem in depth and dispassionately will thereby make an enormous contribution to a realistic understanding of what happened in 1941 and in subsequent years.

Far from considering himself competent in such purely military matters, the author of this book considers it appropriate to note only a few points that lie, as they say, on the surface. One of the most common myths is that by the mid-1930s, highly professional and (which is already completely inexplicable) "experienced" military personnel were trained, and only "the repressions of 1937 deprived the army of command personnel." Argue on this matter

about nothing.

You just need to know the facts. In two years (1938-1939) the Red Army received 158 thousand commanders, political workers and other military specialists. In the three prewar years (1939-1941), 48,000 people graduated from military schools, and 80,000 advanced courses. In the first half of 1941, another 70 thousand officers were sent from schools and academies to the troops. In total, as of January 1, 1941, the payroll of the command and command staff of the army and navy was 579,581 people. In addition, in four years (from 1937 to 1940) 448,000 reserve officers were trained [150].

Arrested were (according to various authors) no more than 10 thousand commanders and political workers [1, p. 368]. As for the officers who died during the years of repression, the most complete list of names compiled by O. Souvenirov consists of 1634 names [149]. Not 40 thousand, as the authors of "perestroika revelations" habitually repeat, but one thousand six hundred and thirty

four! It is easy to see that if all of them had survived, then the number of Red Army commanders would have grown by only 0.3 percent. It is not difficult to understand that a certain shortage of command personnel (13% as of January 1, 1941) was due not to repressions at all, but to a three-fold increase in the number in three years and a huge increase in the technical equipment of the Armed Forces. Finally, it should be remembered that the notorious "understaffing" is just a discrepancy between the actual and regular strength. And the states can be very different. For example, in the Wehrmacht, according to staffing standards, there were 29 soldiers and non-commissioned officers (sergeants) per officer, in the French - 22, in the Japanese - 19. And the states of the Red Army assumed the presence of one officer (political worker) for 6 soldiers and sergeants [1, p.

365]. The thesis that "the best were shot, and mediocrity and rogues were appointed in their place" is not based on anything but unfounded fabrications. Judging by such a formal criterion as the level of education, from the 37th to the 41st years the number of officers with higher and secondary military education not only did not decrease, but increased significantly ! Twice. From 164 to 385 thousand people. On the eve of the war, in positions from battalion commander and above, the share of command personnel without military education was only 0.1% [1, p. 366]. Among the division commanders as of January 1, 1941, 40% had a higher military education, and 60% had a secondary military education. Among the corps commanders, respectively, 52 and 48 [68].

Another question is what was the "efficiency" of this training, if the Military Academy. Frunze received commanders with two classes of the parochial school. Unfortunately, these words are not exaggerated. It was with such an "education" that Voroshilov, People's Commissar for Defense and Timoshenko, who replaced him as People's Commissar, commander of the most powerful, Kiev military district, Zhukov, and Kirponos, who replaced him in this post, rose to the very top of the military hierarchy. Against such a background, Zhukov's predecessor as Chief of the General Staff Meretskov looks simply indecently intelligent - he had four classes in a rural school and an evening school for adults in Moscow.

It was not the repressions of 1937 that caused such a sad state of affairs. Attracting semi-literate, but "socially

relatives" of personnel was the basis of personnel policy in the 20s, and in the 30s, and in the 40s. Exactly the same situation was in the "citizen". In the mid-1930s, among the secretaries of district committees and city committees of the CPSU (b), 70% had only primary education. M. Kaganovich worked as the people's commissar of the defense (and then aviation!) Industry, in whose biography no traces of any education are found at all. Here is another example from a later period. In April 1948, among the 171 military commandants in East Germany (and, presumably, the most "respectable" officers in all respects were selected for such a position), 108 people

had only a primary education, secondary - 52 and only 11 officers had higher education [74, p. 65].

With all this, it is impossible to "learn to be a commander". A commander must be born. Were the executed commanders more talented than those who replaced them? How and how can one prove (or disprove) such a thesis? The conditionally "young" commanders of the Leningrad and Kyiv districts (respectively, the Northern and South-Western fronts) Popov and Kirponos failed the task entrusted to them. It is a fact. But what is the basis for the assumption that their predecessors (Dybenko and Yakir) would have defeated the Germans? Neither one nor the other showed themselves in anything but punitive zeal during the Civil War. Both were preparing for a new war mainly in a state of intoxication, from which they were brought out by arrest and execution.

By the way, about preparation and self-preparation. October 7, 1930 commander I.P. Belov, who was on a business trip to Germany, wrote from there to People's Commissar of Defense Voroshilov: "...

when you look how brutally German officers work on themselves from second lieutenant to general, how they work on preparing units, what results they achieve, it hurts inside from the consciousness of our weakness. I would like to shout with a good obscenity about the need for the most intense study - a decisive alteration of all weak commanders ... "[71, p. 272]

For some reason, it is customary to forget that a considerable number of so-called "experienced military leaders, heroes of the Civil War" successfully survived the 37th year and met the 41st year in the highest ranks. This is People's Commissar of Defense Marshal Timoshenko, his deputies Marshals Budyonny and Kulik, Commander-in-Chief of the North-West Direction

Marshal Voroshilov, Commander of the Southern Front, General of the Army Tyulenev, Commander-in-Chief of the Cavalry, Colonel-General Gorodovikov. All of them are people of the same generation, the same political and life "school" as the repressed Blucher, Yegorov, Tukhachevsky, Fedko. All of them showed themselves so "gloriously" that already six months or a year after the start of the war, Stalin had to send them away from sin, to the deep rear. At the final, victorious stage of the war, few people even remembered these unfortunate commanders in the army. Why, knowing how the survivors showed themselves, do we continue to build illusions about the executed? Why is it generally accepted that the execution of Tukhachevsky demoralized the army to a greater extent than the mass executions of Tambov peasants carried out on the orders of Tukhachevsky himself?

Apparently, Comrade Stalin very quickly realized that he had made a big mistake in the delicate matter of selecting, placing and exterminating cadres, and he tried very hard to correct himself. But how? Like a convict in transit, rummaging through the whole cell in the hope of finding a lost "bull" with the remnants of shag, he shuffled and shuffled the generals in the hope of finally finding someone who would perform a miracle, turn stones into bread and force the impoverished collective farmers to fight for their

own party and its leader. During the first four months of the war in the main strategic direction, the commander of the Western Front was changed seven times (Pavlov, Eremenko, Timoshenko, again Eremenko, again Timoshenko, Konev, Zhukov). The commander of the 21st Army (in the same western direction, over the same period) was changed six times (Gerasimenko, Kuznetsov F.I., Efremov, Gordov,

Kuznetsov V.P., again Gordov). Things were a little better with the neighbors of the 21st Army. Five commanders in the 20th Army (Remezov, Kurochkin, Lukin, Ershakov, Vlasov), four commanders in the 13th (Filatov, Remezov, Golubev, Gorodnyansky), three commanders were replaced during the summer-autumn of 1941 in the 19th and 22nd armies. The commanders appeared and disappeared, not even having time to get acquainted with their new subordinates. Quite quickly, a certain universal rule developed in this leapfrog. It required neither acquaintance with subordinates, nor intelligence of the enemy, nor knowledge of military equipment. It con

tactics and operational art. It thundered and rumbled through all headquarters, trenches and dugouts. AT ANY

COST! And in

addition to this rule - a crafty self-justification: "War

write everything off."

Everything was written off. Or even elevated to a model of "unbending courage and heroism." Like, for example, the infamous Nevsky Piglet. But it really is the brightest example. Only what? In the autumn of 1941, after the blockade of Leningrad was established, a tiny foothold on the left (southern) bank of the Neva remained in our hands. A piece of land with an area of 2 by 3 km. Holding a bridgehead (even if at the cost of heavy losses) makes operational sense only if it is planned to start an offensive with large forces from its territory in the near future. Bridgehead in French means "a place for the army." On the "Nevsky Piglet" it was possible to deploy a rifle battalion, from the strength - a regiment. Yes, and to break through the encirclement was mainly a blow from the outside, and not from the starving city. "Nevsky Piglet" could not have (and in fact did not play) any significant role in breaking the blockade in January 1943. Nevertheless, this "bridgehead" was ordered to be held. At any cost. They kept him. 400 consecutive days. German artillery shot through every meter of this huge mass grave. The total number of soldiers exterminated in this accursed place is estimated by various researchers at 200-300 thousand people. For reference: in the first six months of the war (by December 31, 1941), the Wehrmacht lost 209,595 soldiers and officers on the Eastern Front, killed or missing [74, p. 97; 12, p. 161]. Let's be honest - sometimes even the top leadership expressed their indignation at such a practice of squandering "human contingents." Stalin himself once demanded that his generals "learn to fight with little bloodshed, as the Germans do" (telegram to the command of the South-Western direction of May 27, 1942). And even the bloody Marshal Zhukov (at that time the commander of the Western Front) signed a directive on March 30, 1942, which began with the following words: "The Headquarters of the Supreme High Command and the Military Council of the Front receive numerous letters from the Red Army, commanders and political

negligent attitude towards saving the lives of Red Army infantrymen. Hundreds of examples are given in letters and stories when **commanders of** units and formations kill hundreds and thousands of people during attacks on undestroyed enemy defenses and undestroyed machine guns, on unsuppressed strongholds, with a poorly prepared offensive. These complaints **are certainly fair** and reflect only a part (emphasized by the author) of the existing frivolous attitude towards saving replenishment..." [117, p. 269, 238]

Alas, there was little sense from such directives - primarily because Zhukov himself and his closest associates, both before and after issuing this directive, killed tens and hundreds of thousands of people "with a poorly prepared offensive." This is how Colonel A.K. describes in his memoirs. Kononenko, the visit of the Deputy Commander of the Western Front (i.e., Deputy Zhukov), General G.F. Zakharov to the headquarters of the 1st Guards Cavalry Corps (this is the legendary and famous Belov Corps):

"Anger clouded his already not very clear mind. Zakharov spoke now raising his tone, then lowering it to a whisper with some kind of snake whistle, anger seethed and bubbled in

him ... "I was sent here," said Zakharov, "to make me complete the task by any means, and I will make you do it." fulfill, even if I had to shoot half of your corps for this. It can only be about how to complete the task, and not about what is necessary to complete it. If you don't break through the highway today, I'll

shoot you!" He ordered to judge and immediately shoot five commanders whose soldiers could not break through the highway ... This man, who by mistake became a military leader, was intended by nature to be

an executioner or a patient in a neuro-psychiatric clinic ... "[163]

Communist propagandist historians (whom nature also intended for something) long before the publication of such documents and memoirs became possible, managed to compose a very euphonious excuse for the Zhukovs and Zakharovs: "The country was on

the brink of death, the fate of the whole world was decided, the forced ruthlessness towards his soldiers was justified and necessary ... "

Probably, it is time to ask a counter question - is it not this thoughtless ruthlessness of the command that pushed millions of soldiers to desert and surrender to the enemy? Didn't she put the country on the brink of death? Were there other, much baser motives hiding behind this preoccupation with the "fate of the world"?

Let's take two more documents. These are the orders of Marshals Konev and Zhukov, issued on the same day in April 1945. The country was no longer on the verge of collapse. She was on the threshold of her greatest triumph.

Not only "the fate of the world", but also the post-war borders in Europe have already been drawn and agreed upon in Tehran and Yalta. In such an environment, on April 20, Konev wrote an order: "To the commanders

of the 3rd and 4th Guards. tank armies. The troops of Marshal Zhukov, 10 km from the eastern outskirts of Berlin. I order you to be the first to break into Berlin tonight. Deliver execution." Zhukov's order is a little more detailed: "To the commander of the 2nd Guards.

tank army. Send one of the best brigades from each corps to Berlin and set them the task of breaking through to the outskirts of Berlin no later than 4 a.m. on April 21 at any cost and immediately reporting to Comrade Stalin and announcements in the press" [74].

Why send just one brigade per corps? And so it will be possible to "bring it to Comrade Stalin for a report" and go down in history as "the great marshal of victory." Why faster? Because the corps and the tank army as a whole are "burdened" with artillery, sapper units, and motorized infantry. They slow down traffic. Therefore, Zhukov deliberately sends the two best brigades to be slaughtered, to "unsuppressed strongholds", to minefields, under fire from Faustniks who have settled in the attics. For what? Them, the best, who reached Berlin - for what?

The soulless and ruthless expenditure of "manpower" was naturally complemented by a wild, semi-primitive style of relationships within the commanding elite of the army. "... Eremenko, without asking about anything, began to reproach the Military Council for cowardice and betrayal of the Motherland.

In response to my remarks that such heavy accusations should not be thrown, Eremenko rushed at me with his fists and hit me several times in the face, threatening to shoot me. I declared that he could shoot, but he had no right to humiliate the dignity of a communist and a deputy of the Supreme Soviet. Then Eremenko took out a Mauser, but Efremov's intervention prevented him from firing a shot. After that, he began to threaten Efremov with execution. Throughout this ugly scene, Eremenko hysterically shouted curses. Having cooled down somewhat, Eremenko began to brag that, allegedly with Stalin's approval, he beat several corps commanders, and broke the head of one ... "

The quoted letter to Stalin was written on September 19, 1941. The ugly scene took place at the headquarters of the 13th Army, where the commander of the Bryansk Front had arrived. But, perhaps, Efremov and the author of the letter, a member of the Military Council of the Ganenko army, really were guilty in such a way that they deserved to be shot (albeit in a more legal form, through a tribunal)? No, judging by further events, Eremenko immediately decided to make peace with the "traitors

to the motherland." "Sitting down at the table for dinner, Eremenko forced Efremov to drink vodka with him, and when the latter refused, he began to shout with curses that Efremov was in opposition to him, and could no longer be his deputies ..." [117, p. 162].

For some reason, Stalin loved General Eremenko. He forgave him not only the scuffle at the workplace, but also the defeat of the Bryansk Front (the defeat that became the prologue to the encirclement and death of the South-Western Front in the "Kiev bag"). In the future, it was Eremenko who became the general to whom Stalin came to the front for the first and only time in the entire war. Then, in the fall of 1941, Stalin responded to the "signal" of Commissar Ganenko by issuing Order No. 0391 of October 4, 1941 "On the facts of replacing educational work with repression." Alas, not all orders of Comrade Stalin were carried out. Just two months later, on December 12, 1941, Marshal Timoshenko issued an order to the troops of the South-Western Front No. 0029 "On the facts of abuse of power, unauthorized executions and assault." The order states that not all commanders "accepted for strict execution the orders of comrade. Stalin and drew practical conclusions from it. Moreover, unauthorized executions and assault

“were committed in a drunken state, in full view of the masses of the Red Army and the local

population...” [68] It was not by chance that we placed this chapter almost at the very end of the text of the book. Although a number of researchers and many front-line veterans believe that it is from this, with a conversation about the "fathers of the commanders", that the real reasons for our defeats and monstrous losses should begin. But let's not simplify. If in the army fighters go missing by the millions, and tanks and guns are abandoned by the tens of thousands, then it is hardly possible to restore proper order in it by "educational work" alone. On the other hand, drunken cries, reinforced by the Mauser and fisticuffs, only increased the alienation of the commanders from the mass of soldiers, increased the mutual distrust that was detrimental to the army of those who gave orders, and those who, at the cost of their lives, faced these orders.
execute.

Every stick has two ends. The attitude, rooted in the minds of many commanders, towards people as the cheapest "consumables" was quite adequately supplemented by the indifference of the Red Army to the statutory duty to protect the commander in battle. Unfortunately, we are not talking about individual private shortcomings. The scale of the disappearance of commanders in the Red Army without a trace is staggering. In just four years of the war, only in the ground forces (i.e., excluding aviation commanders who did not return from a sortie) went missing [35, p. 319]:

- 163 division commanders (brigades);
- 221 chief of staff of the division (brigade); -
- 1114 regimental commanders.

Even by the beginning of the 1990s (half a century later), the burial places of forty-four generals of the Red Army were not known [126]. This is not counting those who were shot or died in prisons and camps, not counting those who died in captivity! Forty-four generals - among them two dozen commanders of the corps and army level - shared the fate of ordinary soldiers who disappeared without a trace in the abyss of a terrible war.

There were many soldiers, in the Red Army the bill went into the millions. A soldier often fights alone and dies without witnesses. That is why the large number of unburied human soldiers, if not

justified is at least understandable. But how can a general, a corps or division commander go missing? The commander

does not fight alone. The command and headquarters of the division had a strength (according to the staff in April 1941) of 75 people. This is not counting the personnel of the political department, the tribunal and the commandant's platoon. There are even more people in the headquarters structures of the corps and the army. To what extent did chaos, panic, desertion have to reach so that the dead generals remained abandoned in an open field, without a sign or a trace ...

Barrel and hoops

For many years, any discussion of the similarities between the Stalinist and Hitler regimes was an absolutely taboo topic. Even in a few color films "about the war" it was impossible to see the fascist flag in its real, i.e. red. Then, from the end of the 80s, historians and publicists burst through: they remembered and listed everything, right down to the common song that in one country was sung to the words "higher, and higher, and higher," and in another - "mein Fuhrer, mein führer, mein führer"... Now is the time to recall and discuss the two

most important differences in the structure of these totalitarian despotisms. Hitler came to power on the wave of a

nationalist upsurge (organized by him). "Germany is above all" - this is the main slogan, which, in the ascent of Hitler to power, fulfilled the role of Lenin's ingenious "rob the loot." The Nazis categorically did not allow to rob their own, half-blooded Germans. They sought to rally the nation, while the Bolsheviks were only preoccupied with inciting workers against employers, soldiers against officers, farm laborers against peasants, Cossacks against "nonresidents", leftists against rightists, rightists against leftists .. The Germans did not have to endure either "dispossession" or exposure of millions of "pests". All the charge of mass

hatred necessary for the functioning of the totalitarian dictatorship was directed not inward, but outward - at the external enemies of Germany. The result exceeded all expectations. Until the very last days of the war, the German soldier was ready to shed blood to save the fatherland

from the "Asian hordes of Bolsheviks" and "mercenaries of the Jewish plutocracy of the

West." Against this background, the ideology and practice of Bolshevism look rare idiocy.

Recognizing the inevitability (moreover, the desirability) of more and more new, world and European wars, "the most humane man" and his henchmen declared patriotism a dangerous and harmful relic of the petty-bourgeois consciousness during the World War (which official propaganda then called the "Second Patriotic War") urged to fraternize with enemy soldiers.

Having seized power, the Bolsheviks even expelled any traces of something national from the name of their army. The army became neither "Russian", nor "Russian", and not even "Soviet" (by the name of the state). The army was called "workers' and peasants", the soldier (or, in Russian, a warrior) became the "Red Army", all the enemies were called "whites": White Poles, White Chinese, White Finns...

Lenin can still be understood. Having spent the best years of his life in emigrant coffee houses in Paris and Zurich, in a narrow circle of sectarian fanatics, he broke away from the realities of Russian life and seriously believed that the Russian peasant would go to war, "in order to give the land in Grenada to the peasants." But Comrade Stalin is an unscrupulous pragmatist and a cold realist, how could he have gone that way? Yes, of course, then he came to his senses, dispersed the Comintern, took out the bright images of the "tsarist generals" from the storerooms, Alexander Nevsky took the place of the creator of the Red Army, Leon Trotsky, in the "red corner" ... But all this will

be later. And in war, being late is deadly. Even more significant for the topic of our another difference between Bolshevik and Fascist dictatorships. The

Hitler regime was based on lies and demagoguery. And terror.

Stalin placed only terror at the foundation of his power. There was no demagoguery (that is, a subtle, cunning, carefully adjusted mixture of flattery, half-truth and dosed hysteria) in the Soviet Union of the 1930s. Well, is it possible, in fact, to attribute to the "high art" of demagoguery the situation when people who were exhausted, impoverished, driven from their native places were suddenly announced that "life has become better, life has become more fun"? Is it really possible that Comrade Molotov's stupid muttering (who frankly kept his

listeners for unconscious idiots) to call "demagogy"? And this fundamental

difference in the technology of power was by no means accidental. By the time the

Soviet-German war began, Hitler had fulfilled most of his promises. Stalin and the Bolsheviks cheated the simpletons who trusted them literally in everything.

Hitler united all Germans in one state, gave every worker a job and a decent salary, created an impressive system of social support for motherhood and childhood, expanded the territory of the Reich many times over, led the German army under the triumphal arch of Paris, did not offend any of those representatives of the old German elite who agreed work with the new government. That is why the work of the Goebbels department was very simple: to inflate the real achievements of the Hitler regime to the skies. And the only thing left for the Gestapo was to isolate those few "wise men" who asked the question - how long would this "castle", built on the sand and blood of enslaved peoples, last. The Bolsheviks

fulfilled only one of their many promises: they promised to cut all the "gentlemen" to the root - and cut them out. And with a lot of overkill. Everything else was a complete sham.

To share the expropriated from the expropriators, in other words, the loot - they did not share with anyone. Despite the astronomical sums seized from the royal family, the aristocracy, the church, private capital, the real standard of living of most of the population of the richest country in the world remained as miserable as it was before the revolution.

Instead of the promised equality, a new nobility appeared, who flew planes in the country of beggars and cannibals, rode varnished Packards, lived on the estates of the Grand Dukes, rested on imperial beaches, in a word - enjoyed life according to the standards of American millionaires.

Promises to relocate workers' families from barracks to palaces ended up turning the few surviving palaces into overcrowded, filthy communal bunkhouses.

Promises to give the "factories to the workers" ended with the fact that the former civilian workers were turned *into* serfs, deprived even of the right to quit the factory, *where* they worked in three shifts for miserable *pennies*, but received a full-fledged camp term for half an hour being late.

The landed estates seized by the peasants in 1917 were taken away from them. Together with all the acquired humpback and *all* property, together with freedom, and for many - *with* life. The poverty in which the Smolensk or Novgorod collective farmer vegetated shocked the German *soldiers*, who simply could not believe that people in *Europe* could live like this.

With the rarest exceptions, all the military, engineers, economists, diplomats of old Russia, who voluntarily entered the service of the Bolsheviks, did not live until June 1941 - they were shot or erased into camp dust. *What kind of* demagoguery could make

up for such a deceit, such a collapse of the hopes and expectations of millions of people? That is why Comrade

Stalin was not a demagogue, that is why in the thirty years of his power he never went *to* a single collective farm, did not visit a single factory shop and did not lead round dances with children. He did not seek the love *of the* masses, and he hardly believed in its existence. *He* needed only one obedience - absolute and not reasoning - and he achieved it in the only way known and accessible to him. Terror. Massive and *monstrously* cruel. He was convinced that universal fear *is* the stone on which his unshakable power will rest, and "the gates of hell will not be able to overcome it" ... This was the main mistake of his life. Needless to say, the fear of punishment is the most powerful tool

for influencing human behavior. It's

pointless to deny it. But even more absurd were the hopes of Comrade Stalin that the people crushed by terror could be roused to the Great Patriotic **War**. The poorly educated son of a drunken shoemaker was never able to cope with the really difficult task of determining a reasonable measure of fear and coercion. For life, the frightened Stalinist generals turned out to be simply professionally unsuitable generals. Raised to the heights of power cattle - without

honor, without faith, without shame and conscience - turned out to be absolutely incapable of solving complex managerial tasks.

For many years, ruling Russia undividedly and uncontrollably, Stalin did not understand the meaning of the wise Russian proverb: "The wedge is knocked out with a wedge." The most powerful blow inflicted by the Wehrmacht destroyed the old fear with new fear, and the Chekist's "revolver" somehow faded and got lost among the roar of tens of thousands of guns, among the clang of caterpillars of thousands of tanks. The most important thing was that no one knew where the military, civilian, party and all other things had gone bosses.

On the morning of June 22, the Stalinist nomenklatura found itself not even between two, but

between three fires. The Nazis were advancing from the west, they did not hide their intentions towards

the communists. From the east, from the Kremlin and from the Lubyanka, orders were flying, one more to be executed by firing squad than the other. The most numerous enemy was nearby - and that reckless determination with which the Bolsheviks had once burned all the bridges between themselves and the deceived, muzzled people, now turned against them. So their wives had to grab a pot of figus

and run in a panic wherever their eyes look. The consequences of the exodus of leaders were fatal. Any system fails after the destruction of the control center. Any army temporarily (or even forever) loses its combat effectiveness in the event of the loss of commanders. But we didn't have "any", but a very specific system: a system held together by terror and controlled by terror.

Together with the fled bosses, fear went away - and the Red Army, great and terrible, began to rapidly and uncontrollably fall apart. Like a barrel from which the

hoops were knocked down.

Everything is very difficult

Let's not simplify. The life of a multi-million human community is infinitely more complex than any scheme. There was enthusiasm, and patriotic enthusiasm, and hundreds of thousands of volunteers. The phrase is "as

one man, the entire Soviet people" is suitable only for a song. Soviet society was very, very heterogeneous. There were high

school boys who dreamed of exploits and were very afraid of "being late for the war." Were. It is about them that our "engineers of human souls" wrote heaps of sentimental books, subtly and imperceptibly leading the reader to the idea that these moods of teenagers stunned by propaganda are the "voice of the people". There were officers and

generals (to blame - the red commanders, they became "officers" a little later), who aspired (as well as their colleagues in all countries and at all times) to fame, honors, titles and orders. For them, a war, any war - with the "Finland booger", with the "White Chinese", together with the Wehrmacht, against the Wehrmacht - was an honorable job. There were

various and many-sided bosses - party organizers and directors, writers and chairmen, factory committees and supply managers, whom the Boss taught not only to agree, but also sincerely believe in what is written in the editorial of the next issue of Pravda. And since in Stalin's empire the "warm place" was usually lost along with the head, then those who got out "from rags to riches" had practically no choice: only to love their native party, to love until death.

Finally, we had "nominees". Energetic, ambitious youth, children of janitors and watchmen, for whom the revolution opened the way to the heights of the social pyramid. By 1940, out of 170,000 students who received higher education during the first five-year plan, 152,000 were in leadership positions, and out of 370,000 engineers who graduated from a university in the second five-year plan, 266,000 (i.e., 2 out of 3 were appointed to a leadership position after 3 years of work) [136, p. 258]. Such were the realities of "social mobility" of the Stalin era. The Soviet government was for them - engineers, Stakhanovists, young poets and actors - "our native Soviet government." On the thorny path to success, they tore each other's throats without a shadow of embarrassment (in simpler and more ordinary terms, they scribbled denunciations and spoke with "criticism" at party meetings), with the same militancy they were ready to meet an external enemy that encroached on their bright future.

These four categories of citizens accounted for about 5-10% of the adult population of the country. Which is not much at all. At least in the Middle Ages, in any country in Europe, the number of the military class (noble knights) was expressed in even smaller percentages. At least, Stalin had a huge reserve to make up for losses in the command staff of the army and industry. Finally, the author does not at

all propose to reduce the entire history of the war only to describe the psychological effects and affects.

"But do you know what makes us strong, Basmanov? / Not by the army, no, not by Polish help, / But by opinion; yes! by the opinion of the people," says one of the characters in Pushkin's "Boris Godunov." Golden words, but do not forget about that the army rests not only on the "opinion of the people", but also on orders and discipline. The role of the military leader is enormous, and where commanders and commissars were able to maintain order and controllability, were able to save their soldiers from infection with general panic, there the enemy received a worthy rebuff in the first battles.

Such divisions, regiments, battalions, squadrons, batteries were found on every sector of the front. Let us recall by name at least some of the many thousands of heroes.

Three times the Germans were knocked out of the border Przemysl by the 99th Infantry Division of Colonel N.I. Dementieva. Only on June 28, on the day when the Germans had already occupied Minsk and Daugavpils, Dementiev's division moved away from the banks of the

border river San. At the very tip of the German tank wedge, rushing towards Lutsk and Rovno, stood the 1st anti-tank brigade K.S. Moskalenko - and not once did the enemy manage to break through the battle formations of the

1st PTAB. On the outskirts of Dubno, in the very first days of the war, the Nazis were driven and smashed by the 43rd and 34th Panzer Divisions under the command of Colonels Tsibin and Vasiliev.

Until the end of June, the garrisons of the bunkers of the Grodno, Brest, Strumilovsky, Rava-Russian border fortified areas met the enemy with fire. Caught in the rear of the enemy, without communication, without food and water, they fought to the last bullet and the last man. On the northern approaches to Minsk

on June 25, 1941, the 100th Infantry Division of Major General I.N. Russiyanova. the day before,

due to confusion among the higher command, all the artillery of the division, up to and including the battalion, was withdrawn from the division and transferred to another, passive sector of the front, from where it was returned only in the afternoon of June 27. In this, practically unarmed condition, the soldiers of Russiyanov's division met the attack of the 39th German tank corps. For three days they held their line of defense, burned enemy tanks with glass flasks of gasoline, destroyed up to a regiment of motorized infantry, and in a night battle defeated the headquarters of the 25th tank

regiment of the Wehrmacht. On July 2, 1941, the 1st Motorized Rifle Moscow Proletarian Red Banner Division, Colonel Ya.G. Cruiser. The blow was so strong that the two commanders of the German tank groups, Goth and Guderian, without saying a word, note in their memoirs both this battle and the fact that "T-34 tanks first appeared here." The last remark is doubly surprising. Firstly, according to the state,

only light tanks were to be in service with a motorized rifle division (in the 1st Moscow division these were the latest BT-7M). No "thirty-fours" of the motorized division was supposed to. Secondly, the 6th and 11th mechanized corps of the Western Front were armed with 266 T-34 tanks. Well, it turns out that the Germans did not even notice them? Nevertheless, Goth and Guderian in this case do not lie. The fact is that during the advancement of the division from Smolensk to the Berezina, Kreizer discovered 30 ownerless "thirty-fours" at the Orsha station. These thirty tanks, the drivers of which for the first time in their lives sat down at the levers of the T-34, and made the Germans an "impression" much stronger than hundreds of tanks of the 6th and 11th mechanized corps.

On the extreme northern flank of the war, in the far Arctic, the 14th Army under the command of Lieutenant General V.A. fought heroically. Frolova. It will not be superfluous to repeat once again that this army fulfilled the task assigned to it by the pre-war cover plans, stopped the enemy's offensive already in the border zone, actually bled and defeated Diti's elite mountain ranger corps. What we have mentioned here

is only a few episodes of only the first two weeks of the war. These episodes are related to combat

actions of large formations (division, army) and therefore are described in sufficient detail in the military history literature. Thousands of heroes of 1941 fought almost alone, left in the chaos of a general flight without neighbors, without communication - and without hope.

stay alive...

The most tragic thing is that war is in one respect very different from other human activities. If out of 12 rowers in a rowboat, 10 are resting and only two are rowing, then the boat is still moving. Slower than it could, but moving. When out of 120 garrisons of the Brest fortified area 20 fight to the last bullet, and 100 "retreat to Belsk", then the fortified area as an operational unit simply ceases to exist. Well, the German commanders were not so stupid as to fill up the embrasures of a fighting pillbox with the corpses of their soldiers, if it could be easily bypassed - even to the left, even to the right. Practically on every sector of the huge front of the war that began on June 22, there were those who, amid the general chaos and stampede, stood to the death. But, no matter how bitter it is to write this, if "the enemy was resisted by individual units, and not by some organized army," then the self-sacrifice of nameless heroes could not change the general situation, could not stop the enemy's advance deep into the country, could not even save the fleeing crowds from captivity and death.

"Hitler's stupid policy..."

Salvation came from where Stalin could not have expected it. This miraculous deliverance from imminent death shocked the leader of the people so much that he could not restrain himself and declared it publicly. True, then he quickly came to his senses and did not say that out loud again. But in November 1941, speaking at a solemn meeting dedicated to the next anniversary of the Bolshevik coup, Stalin suddenly told the truth: "... Hitler's stupid policy turned the

peoples of the USSR into sworn enemies of today's Germany" [I. Stalin. "On the Great Patriotic War". M., Politizdat, 1949 p. 59].

In these words, the main reason why the fight for the redistribution of robber booty between two bloody

dictatorships eventually turned into the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people. Well, the clause "almost" refers to the fact that the cannibal Hitler could not have acted otherwise. Paranoid, obsessed with delusional ideas of racial exclusivity, a narcissistic fanatic who considered himself an instrument of "providence" - could he not commit those "stupid things" that Comrade Stalin had in mind?

Therefore, it has no reasonable content even discussion of the question of what would have happened if the Nazis:

- proclaimed the independence of Ukraine, and did not send S.

Bandera and his comrades to a concentration camp;

- all prisoners of war were sent home, and those who still had a house on the other side of the front were fed steaks from "trophy" cows three times a day;

- immediately disbanded the collective

farms and promised to release all

prisoners of the Gulag after the victory of Germany and the expulsion of Stalin;

- created an anti-Bolshevik Russian volunteer army

and alternative Russian government. To

numerous suggestions from the Wehrmacht generals (who saw the situation in the USSR from close range), Hitler at first replied that he did not need an alliance with the Slavic "subhumans", and the generals were required to defeat Russia, and not liberate it. Then he stopped answering. When the commander of Army Group Center, Field Marshal von Bock, sent to Berlin a project to create a "liberation army" of 200 thousand volunteers and form a Russian government in Smolensk, his report was returned in November 1941 with Keitel's resolution: "Such ideas cannot be discussed with the Fuhrer. The captives were herded like cattle into huge meadows entangled with barbed wire and starved there with dysentery. The wounded were finished off

on the spot, often together with the medical staff of hospitals. Started on the initiative of the army command, the release of prisoners of a number of nationalities was prohibited on November 13, 1941 [35]. And then came the early and very cold winter that year, in which two-thirds of the prisoners of 1941 died from cold, hunger and disease. The occupiers even strengthened the collective farm system, as a form of organization of forced labor, with cane (more precisely, execution) discipline. The new order turned out to be even

simpler than the old one - execution

on the spot for any offense. With defiant frankness, it was explained to the people that serving the representatives of the "master race" would henceforth become an occupation for those who were allowed to live. Not everyone

was allowed. Nightmarish scenes of the genocide of Jews, the mass death of prisoners of war, executions of hostages, public executions - all this shocked the population of the occupied regions. And even those who met the German invasion in the summer of 1941 with the expectation of changes for the better were horrified and thought about how to live under such a "new order"

it is forbidden.

Yes, at first the Nazis did not advertise their atrocities at all. On the contrary, leaflets, which rained down in millions from German aircraft, promised the soldiers of the Red Army good food in captivity and return home after the end of the war. But the "wireless telephone" of the people's rumor worked - and worked with amazing efficiency. So every day and month, more and more millions of people began to realize that the war in which they have to fight and die is no longer going on for the sake of the release of the next "class brothers" in Zanzibar, not for the final triumph of the ever-living teachings of Karl Marla but simply so that they, their families, their children can live and hope for a better future. That's when the Great Patriotic War of the Soviet people began. A profound upheaval in the minds of a huge people could not happen all at once and everywhere. The transition from collapse, panic and mass desertion to the nationwide

Patriotic War was not easy and lengthy. And in many units and formations - as we said

in the previous chapter - tens of thousands of soldiers and commanders of the Red Army entered the Great Patriotic War already at dawn on June 22, 1941. "In peace and death is red." The nameless heroes of the beginning of the war did not get even this modest consolation. They had to die in obscurity, never knowing whether they managed to bring one common Victory closer at the cost of their lives. Most of them did not get any orders, or glory, or even a tombstone. But it was they who saved the country with their

sacrificial feat. This resistance, these non-surrendering bunkers, batteries, battalions again and again forced the Germans

turn around from marching order to combat, slowed down the pace, knocked down arrogance.

However, the damage inflicted on the enemy was not limited to just downed arrogance. Already in the

first three weeks of the war with the USSR, the Luftwaffe irretrievably lost 550 combat aircraft, and another 336 aircraft needed lengthy repairs [60]. In parentheses, we note that these are the smallest figures known to the author. Losing 886 aircraft is very little. When compared with the losses of the Soviet Air Force. But for the Germans, such losses meant that every third aircraft with which they started the war had already departed. Already at the end of the first month of fighting, by July 22, 1941, 37 pilots out of those 112 who were in service on the morning of June 22 were killed or missing in the JG54 fighter squadron. Note that the JG54 squadron distinguished itself by the smallest losses among all the Luftwaffe fighter squadrons throughout the war.

The losses of the German tank groups were very small - in comparison with the astronomical figures of the abandoned Soviet tanks. And yet, by July 10, 1941, the Germans had irretrievably lost 350 tanks. Every tenth. This, of course, was not enough - in order to stop the offensive of the Wehrmacht. But this, presumably, was enough for each of the nine remaining crews to look at the charred corpses of their fellow soldiers and think that the victorious march on Moscow was no longer an easy walk. Well, by the end of the year, irretrievable losses had grown to 2765 tanks - five of the six tanks that crossed the border river on June 22, 1941, had already turned into a pile of scrap metal.

Finally, let's not discount the natural geographical factor. It should not be absolutized (as is customary in Western historiography), but also forget that the vast expanses of Russia absorbed and dissolved the army of invaders, too.

it is forbidden.

Napoleon was easy. His army, stretched out in a thread, marched in a column to Moscow. The Wehrmacht launched an offensive on the front from Kaunas to Przemysl (a little less than 700 km in a straight line), and by the end of the year, battles were already taking place on the front from Tikhvin to Rostov-on-Don (1600 km in a straight line). Communications of the German army were continuously stretched. Each projectile and each liter of gasoline had to overcome

a gigantic distance of one and a half to two thousand kilometers before reaching the front. These lines of communications had to be guarded, provided with air defense, garrisons, and road restoration services. What in Russia were called

roads gave the Germans the impression of specially created obstacles. Already on July 13, 1941, the commander of the 3rd Panzer Group G. Goth reported to Hitler's personal adjutant that "the morale of the personnel was suppressed by the vast territory and desert of the country, as well as the poor condition of roads and bridges, which did not allow using all the possibilities of mobile units" [13]. This was in dry and hot July, on the sandy soil of the Vitebsk and Smolensk regions, they were no longer satisfied with the condition of the roads! And ahead were the autumn rains, which turned the dirt roads of the center of Russia into a continuous sea of impassable mud. Therefore, when we say that

"the Germans have reached Moscow", we are making a big mistake. Wehrmacht divisions, exhausted and bloodless by many months of battles, did not reach, but on their last legs crawled to Moscow. Here they were met by 30-degree frosts and 40 fresh divisions from Siberia and the Far East.

So, a lot of factors different in meaning and origin, **the main** of which was, of course, not empty "space", but **the heroic resistance** of a number of units and formations of the Red Army, ultimately led to the fact that the "blitzkrieg" failed. And the protracted war turned out to be disastrous for the Wehrmacht. And not only because the resources of Germany could not be compared with the combined power of the three largest powers in the world (USSR, USA, British Empire). Time itself contributed to the growth of combat, tactical, psychological training of soldiers of the armies of the anti-Hitler coalition. The Eastern Front stabilized (for six

months from November 1941 to May 1942, the Germans practically did not advance anywhere, and in the center they even had to retreat 200 km), and the Soviet Union thus won the precious time that was necessary for so that a profound revolution in the attitude of the people to the war could take place.

Our story has come to an end. It only remains for us to answer the question of what is included in the title of the last part of the book. Of course, there can be no question of establishing some kind of "exact date", but some quite rational criteria and reasonable time frames can and should be indicated. To do this, once again open the statistical collection "Secret stamp removed." This time - on page 152. There is a table of irretrievable and sanitary (wounded and sick) losses of the personnel of the active army, broken down by quarters of each year of the war. The sad experience of a great many

military conflicts of the 20th century shows that there is a certain, very stable, ratio of the number of those killed and wounded in hostilities. Probably, it reflects some kind of fundamental relationship between the "strength" of the human body and the damaging effects of weapons of that era.

This ratio is 1:3. For every one killed, there are three wounded. By the way, it was in such proportions that the losses of the Wehrmacht in 1941 were formed (see above). In

other words, in a "normal war" setting (forgive me for such a cynical expression), the share of sanitary losses should be 75% of the total number of losses. More precisely, it should be even more than 75%, since, in addition to the wounded, there are also sick people, and there are not so few of them among people who live for months in mud-filled trenches. And

what does table number 72 show us?

In the third quarter of 1941 (that is, for the first three months of the war), the share of sanitary losses was only 24.66% of all losses. This is a very dark "miracle". Behind him is a huge number of prisoners and deserters (who made up the bulk of the irretrievable losses of the Red Army), behind him is the tragedy of the wounded thrown to the enemy, who were not taken to the rear, and therefore were not taken into account in the column

"sanitary losses". In the fourth quarter of 1941, the proportion of sanitary losses almost doubled to 40.77%. Such proportions are still very far from the situation in a normal fighting army, but nevertheless the

changes are obvious. In the first quarter of 1942 - already 65.44%.

In the second and third quarters - respectively 47.48% and 52.79%. The Germans overwintered, regained strength and again drove thousands of columns of prisoners from the "cauldrons" near Kerch and Kharkov. But let us note that the monstrous situation of the summer of 1941 did not happen again!

By the end of 1942, the proportion of sanitary losses increased almost to the "normal" value of 67.25%. Further, until the victorious May 1945, there are such numbers: 79, 75, 76, 77, 79, 78 ...

Excuse me. Believe me, I understand all the blasphemy of "playing with percentages" when millions of killed and maimed people are behind these percentages. But what to do - the work of a military historian is little more attractive than the work of a pathologist. Believe me, the historian and the pathologist do what they do, not because of an unhealthy addiction to the stench of a corpse, but in order to establish the final, always belated, but most accurate diagnosis.

Of course, all these figures can be considered only as one of the possible approaches to assessing the situation. But even taking into account all these reservations, the fact of a fundamental, qualitative change in the behavior of the bulk of the army is obvious and indisputable. Equally indisputable is the fact of a radical change in the situation in the occupied territories, the rapid growth of the partisan movement, which emerged in early 1943.

Some approximate time frames in which this "great turning point" took place can be defined as follows: autumn 1942 - spring 1943. Translated into the generally

accepted chronology of the war - from the Battle of Stalingrad to the Kursk Bulge.

Epilogue

"The World-Historical Significance of the Victory of the Soviet People in the Great Patriotic War". This question among schoolchildren and students has always been considered very simple. Lucky. No need to memorize the dates,

memorize the names of the fronts - know the cracks about "creating a world socialist system", "strengthening authority in the arena", "liquidating a hostile environment" ... the power of the communist regime, a huge increase in its ability to make the whole

Certainly, height military-technical world tremble with fear amazing. Hundreds of tons of technical documentation were taken out of defeated Germany. Entire research and design teams were taken out. From the former allies by hook or by crook they bought, mined, stole the latest military

technologies.

The loot was huge: jet engines, turboprop engines (one of which still works in the sky to this day), anti-aircraft missiles, radars, infrared homing systems, a strategic bomber (copied one for one called Tu-4), cruise missiles, ballistic missiles, steam-gas turbines for submarines, glide bombs, heat-resistant alloys. And finally, the pinnacle of all efforts - thousands of pages of technical descriptions of the American atomic bomb. By the time Stalin died—or was poisoned by his Politburo comrades—the Soviet Union was armed and very dangerous. More than ever. But this is not why millions of people were martyred. Not for this. Even in those unthinkable painful

conditions that were created by the long-term arbitrariness of the criminal Stalinist regime, it was the Soviet people, it was their multinational Red Army that saved Europe from fascist enslavement. Again, as in 1812-1814, the forced Russian peasant opened the door to peace, freedom and prosperity for other peoples. What were the deep, long-term consequences of the Great Patriotic War for Russia itself?

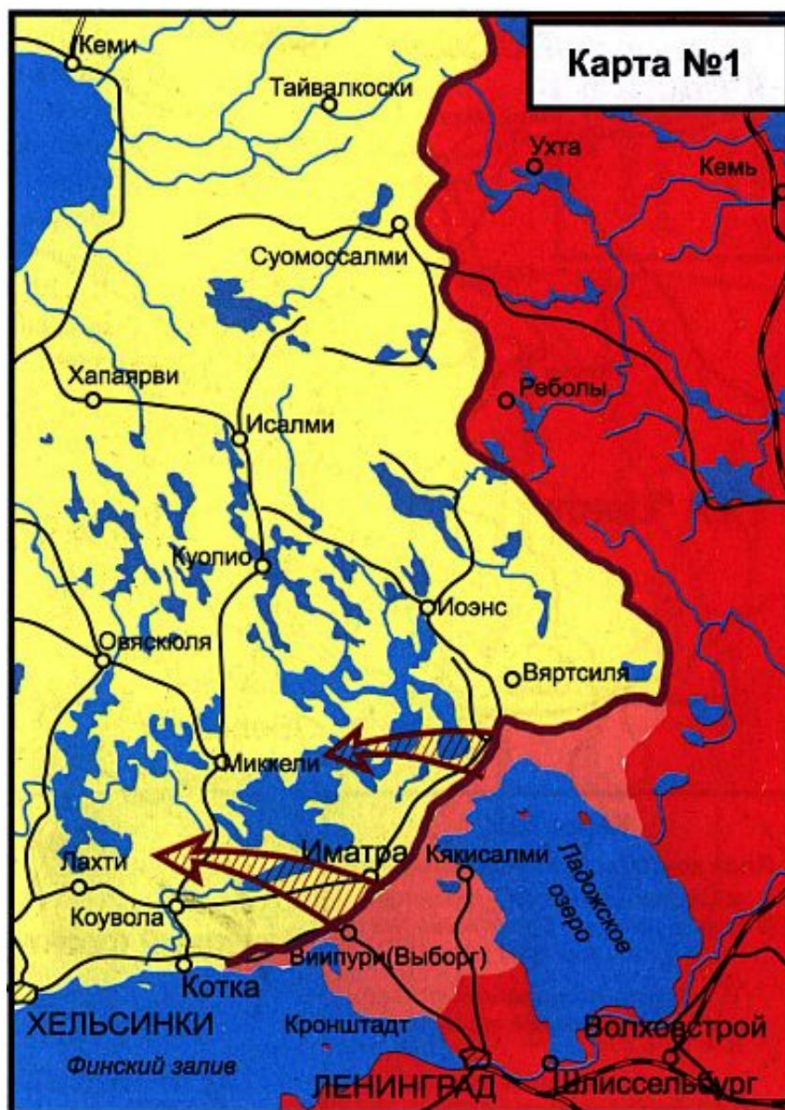
How did the death of millions of the best, most honest,
the most daring on moral principles, on the very gene pool of the nation?

Were the spiritual forces of the people overstrained by the superhuman
tension of those four years?

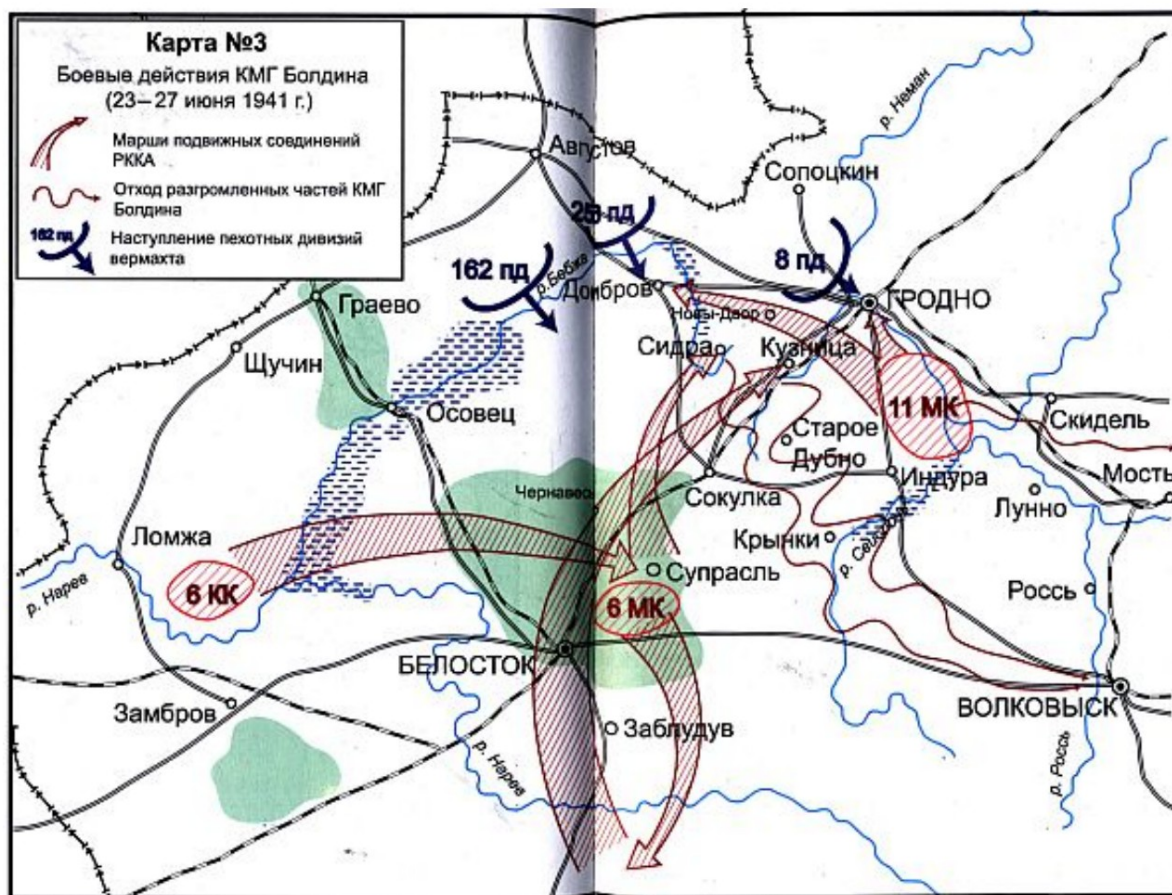
Could not that brightest flash of mass heroism, mass self-sacrifice,
which the Soviet people showed to the astonished world, turn out to be the
last surge of strength of the dying?

These are the questions that only life itself can answer, and in the face
of which the historian can only shut up and put an end to it.

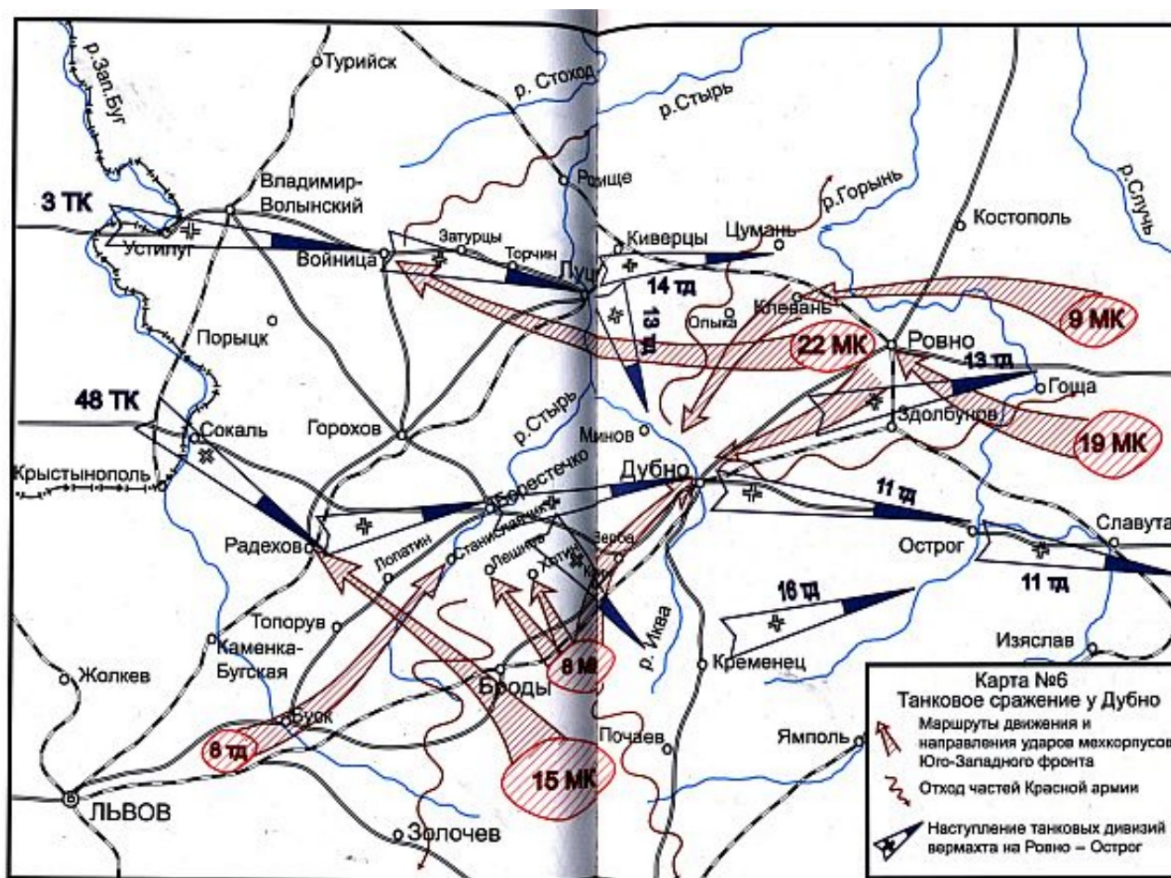
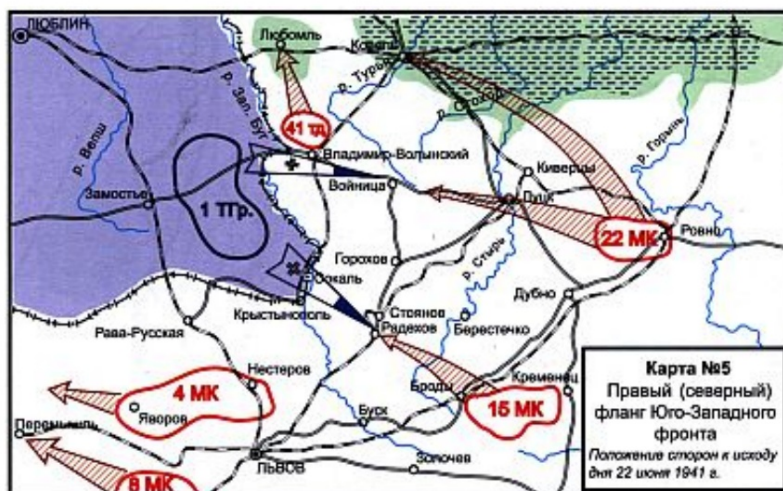
Map Application











Annex 1

Structure of the Armed Forces, accepted terms and abbreviations

1. The structure of the ground

forces The basis of the armed forces of the USSR and Germany was the ground forces. In relation to Germany, they are designated by the word "Wehrmacht". As for the Soviet Union, the term "Red Army" (Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, RKKA) can refer to both the entire Armed Forces and only to the ground forces. 1. 1. Units and formations The primary "cell" of the military structure

is the regiment. This is a

military unit that has its own individual number and its own banner. Structural units within the regiment do not have their own numbers and are designated by ordinal "personal" numbers, for example: "the third of the 486th rifle platoon of the second company of the first battalion regiment" or "the second battery of the first division of the 265th artillery regiment." In the Red Army there were rifle regiments (sp), motorized rifle regiments (smp), tank regiments (tp).

Artillery regiments, depending on the type of weapons used, were designated as "cannon artillery regiment" (pap) or "howitzer artillery regiment" (gap). Several regiments were combined into a division. So, in the rifle division (sd) of the Red Army there were three rifle and two artillery regiments, 14,483 personnel.

Several divisions were combined into a rifle corps (SC). The Red Army rifle corps did not have a fixed strength and could include from two to five rifle divisions.

In relation to the Wehrmacht, the same terms and abbreviations are used, only instead of the term "rifle" the term "infantry" is used: infantry regiment (pp), infantry division (pd). The infantry division of the Wehrmacht consisted of 16,589 personnel, including three infantry and one artillery regiment, several

individual battalions. An analogue of the rifle corps in the Wehrmacht is designated by the term "army corps" (AK). Several

corps (as a rule, two or three rifle corps, one mechanized) were united into a large military unit - the Army. In the text of the book, they are designated as follows: 5A, 10A, 23A ...

If at the level of rifle (infantry) regiments - divisions - corps of the Red Army and the Wehrmacht had approximately the same number of personnel and weapons, then the army in the Wehrmacht was, as a rule, twice as numerous (due to the larger number of corps and individual divisions included in it).). 1.2. Fronts

and Army Groups In

peacetime, the Army was the largest unit in the Red Army. During the war (or on the eve of the planned war), several armies, separate divisions and corps were united into the most powerful unit - the front. So, before the start of the war with Germany, five fronts were deployed:

- Northern Front (S. f.) in the Leningrad-Murmansk region; -
- North-Western Front (S-3. f.) in the Baltics; - Western
- Front (3. f.) in Belarus; - Southwestern
- Front (South-3. f.) in Ukraine; - The Southern
- Front (Yu. f.) in Moldova and the Odessa region. These fronts were created on the basis of units and formations of the

Leningrad Military District (LenVO), the Baltic Special Military District (PribOVO), the Western Special Military District (ZapOVO), the Kiev Special Military District (KOVO), the Odessa Military District (OdVO).

In the Wehrmacht, the analogue of the "front" was a large formation called an army group. Three army groups were deployed for the invasion of the Soviet Union: "North" (with the task of advancing across the Baltic to Leningrad), "Center" (for an attack on Minsk - Smolensk) and "South" (to capture Ukraine and, in cooperation with the Romanian army, Moldova).

1.3. Tank (motorized) troops In relation to the Red Army and the Wehrmacht, the terms "tank troops", "moving units", "mechanized formations" are used to refer to this type of troops.

"moto-mechanical parts",

The structure of the motorized troops of the Red Army and the Wehrmacht did not coincide in everything, so direct comparisons can lead to erroneous

conclusions. The tank division (TD) of the Red Army included two tank, one howitzer and one motorized rifle regiments. The nominal number of tanks is 375 units.

The tank division of the Wehrmacht, with approximately the same number of personnel as the tank division of the Red Army (11,792 and 10,940 people), had only one tank regiment, and in some divisions this regiment was two-battalion, and in others - three-battalion composition. Accordingly, the regular number of tanks in the tank divisions of the Wehrmacht was 196 or 258 units, i.e. one and a half to two times less than in the Soviet tank division.

On the other hand, the Wehrmacht tank division included an anti-tank artillery battalion and two motorcycle battalions, which was not in the Red Army tank division.

The motorized division (md) of the Wehrmacht did not have a single tank in its arsenal and was an ordinary infantry division equipped with a large number of vehicles and motorcycles for transporting personnel and weapons. The motorized rifle division (med) of the Red Army in terms of the number of personnel was significantly smaller than the German motorized (11.5 thousand versus 16.5 thousand), but included, along with two motorized rifle and one artillery regiments, also a tank regiment and in terms of the number of tanks (275 units) it surpassed any German tank division. In the next, corps link, the differences in the

structure and armament of the motorized troops of the Red Army and the Wehrmacht increased even more. The German tank corps (TK) had the most heterogeneous structure: they could have two or four divisions, including one or two tank divisions. For example, the 14th TK (Army Group South) had only one tank division (9th TD), which had two tank battalions, a total of 143 tanks.

At the same time, the 39th TK (Army Group Center) included two motorized and two tank divisions (7th TD and 20th TD), whose tank regiments consisted of three battalions each. In total, the 39th TK had 494 tanks.

The mechanized corps (MK) of the Red Army had a strictly standard structure: two tank and one motorized rifle divisions, a separate motorcycle regiment, an anti-tank artillery battalion and other auxiliary units. The staff strength is 1,031 tanks and 36,080 personnel.

There were no formations of a higher level than the mechanized corps in the tank forces of the Red Army. In the Wehrmacht, four tank groups (TGr) were formed - the 1st TGr as part of the South Army Group, the 2nd and 3rd as part of the Center Army Group and the 4th TGr as part of the North Army Group. They included two (4th and 3rd tank groups) or three (2nd and 1st tank groups) tank corps. The largest number of tanks as of June 22, 1941 was in Guderian's 2nd Panzer Group - 994 tanks. Thus, in terms of the

number of the main type of military equipment (tanks), the German tank corps, as a rule, was inferior to the tank division of the Red Army, and the Wehrmacht tank group corresponded to the Soviet mechanized corps. On the other hand, in terms of the number of personnel, motorized infantry and artillery, the Wehrmacht tank group was two to three times larger than the mechanized corps of the Red

Army. 2. Military

aviation The military aviation (Luftwaffe) of Nazi Germany was a strictly centralized structure. The Luftwaffe included not only all aviation units, but also units of territorial air defense (anti-aircraft artillery, searchlight units, etc.). On the contrary, in the Soviet Union there were, in

fact, several different "aviations": military aviation (whose units and formations were operationally subordinate to the commanders of combined arms armies and fronts), aviation of the Navy, long-range bomber aviation, which was subordinate to aviation, directly to the High Command of the Red Army, Air Defense Aviation (Air Defense).

The main tactical unit of combat aviation was the aviation regiment (an aviation group in the Luftwaffe). The Soviet aviation regiment consisted of five squadrons of 12 crews each and a command level, a total of 62-64 crews. As part of the air group

the Luftwaffe had only three squadrons ("staff-fell") of 12 crews and a headquarters link, in total - 40 crews.

Both in Soviet aviation and in the Luftwaffe, regiments (groups) were armed, as a rule, with aircraft of the same type in order to simplify the maintenance, study and repair of equipment. As part of the Soviet aviation, fighter aviation regiments (IAP), bomber (BAP), assault (SHAP) and reconnaissance (RAP) regiments were formed. Sometimes the name of the bomber regiments indicated their "functional" purpose: long-range bomber (DBAP), high-speed bomber (SBAP), short-range bomber

(BBAP). Several regiments (from 3 to 5) were combined into an air division: fighter (NAD), bomber (BAD), mixed (SAD). Assault aviation regiments were part of the SADs, reconnaissance aviation regiments, as a rule, were subordinate to the command of the fronts (1-2 regiments as part of the aviation of the front / district). The formation

of the Luftwaffe, similar to the Soviet air division, was called a squadron. With a few

exceptions, each squadron included only three air groups.

The following designations are accepted in the literature: JG (fighter), KG (bomber), StG (assault) squadron. formations equipped Messerschmitt-110 multipurpose bombers were with designated as ZG or SKG. If in Soviet aviation each regiment had its own

"personal" number (for example, the 123rd IAP, 40th BAL), then in the Luftwaffe each group was designated as an integral part of the squadron. For example, II / KG 53 is the second

group of the 53rd bomber squadron. Several squadrons of the Luftwaffe

(from 4 to 6) were reduced to an aviation corps. Taking into account the fact that many squadrons did not arrive on the Eastern Front at full strength, the air corps included from 8 to 16 groups, and in terms of the number of aircraft and crews, the Luftwaffe air corps corresponded to 1-2 Soviet air divisions.

In total, five aviation corps operated on the Eastern Front, consisting of three Air Fleets (Air Fleets). The actions of Army Group North were supported by the 1st V. f. (1st Air Corps), 2nd V. f. (2nd and

8th air corps) fought over Belarus, two air corps of the 4th air corps. acted, respectively, in Ukraine (5th corps), in Moldova and in the Black Sea region (4th corps). In

Soviet aviation, the corps link existed only in long-range bomber aviation, which included four air corps, two bomber divisions each. In the first days of the war, they were stationed: the 1st DBAK in the Novgorod region, the 3rd DBAK in the Smolensk region, the 2nd DBAK in the Kursk region, the 4th in the Zaporozhye region, a separate 18th DBAC in the Kiev region.

On the eve of the war (June 19, 1941), it was decided to deploy three air defense fighter corps (6th in Moscow, 7th in Leningrad and 8th in Baku), and there should not have been divisions in these corps, but 10-12 fighter regiments included in the corps were directly subordinate to the command of the corps and the air defense zone. The formation of air defense fighter corps was completed already during the war.

Appendix 2

The composition and armament of the tank troops of the Wehrmacht and the Red Army

Группа армий «Север» 4-я танковая группа 41-й ТК (1-я тд, 6-я тд) 390/90/155/121/ 56-й ТК (8-я тд) 212/49/118/30/ всего танков: 602	Северо-Западный фронт 12-й МК (23-я тд, 28-я тд, 202-я мсд) 730/0/ 3-й МК (2-я тд, 5-я тд, 84-я мсд) 672/110/ 1-й МК (3-я тд, 163-я мсд) 666/5/ 21-й МК (42-я тд, 46-я тд, 185-я мсд) 120/0/ 2188
Группа армий «Центр» Западный фронт 3-я танковая группа 39-й ТК (7-я тд, 20-я тд) 494/128/288/61/ 57-й ТК (12-я тд, 19-я тд) 448/150/219/60/ 2-я танковая группа 47-й ТК (17-я тд, 18-я тд) 420/112/99/187/ 46-й ТК (10-я тд) 182/45/0/125/ 24-й ТК (3-я тд, 4-я тд) 392/102/60/207/ всего танков: 1936	Западный фронт 11-й МК (29-я тд, 33-я тд, 204-я мсд) 414/20/ 6-й МК (4-я тд, 7-я тд, 29-я мсд) 1131/452/ 13-й МК (25-я тд, 31-я тд, 208-я мсд) 282/0/ 14-й МК (22-я тд, 30-я тд, 205-я мсд) 518/0/ 7-й МК (14-я тд, 18-я тд, 1-я мсд) 959/103/ 5-й МК (13-я тд, 17-я тд) 861/17/ отдельная 57-я тд 200/0/ 4365

Группа армий «Юг»	Юго-Западный и Южный фронты
<p><u>1-я танковая группа</u></p> <p>3-й ТК (13-я тд, 14-я тд) 296/90/42/140/ 48-й ТК (11-я тд, 16-я тд) 289/89/47/135/ 14-й ТК (9-я тд) 143/40/11/80/</p> <p>всего танков: 728</p>	<p>22-й МК (19-я тд, 41-я тд, 215-я мсд) 712/31/ 15-й МК (10-я тд, 37-я тд, 212-я мсд) 749/136/ 4-й МК (8-я тд, 32-я тд, 81-я мсд) 979/414/ 8-й МК (12-я тд, 34-я тд, 7-я мсд) 899/171/ 9-й МК (20-я тд, 35-я тд, 131-я мсд) 316/0/ 19-й МК (40-я тд, 43-я тд, 213-я мсд) 453/5/ 16-й МК (15-я тд, 39-я тд, 240-я мсд) 478/76/ 24-й МК (45-я тд, 49-я тд, 216-я мсд) 222/0/ 109мсд (5-й МК) 209/0/ 2-й МК (11-я тд, 16-я тд, 15-я мсд) 527/60/ 18-й МК (44-я тд, 47-я тд, 218-я мсд) 282/0/</p> <p>5826</p>
<p>ИТОГО: 3266 танков в том числе 895 танкеток 1039 легких танков 1146 средних танков</p>	<p>ИТОГО: 12 379 танков в том числе 1600 Т-34 и КВ</p>

Notes

1. The number of tanks in the formations of the Wehrmacht is indicated as follows: total tanks in the hull / wedges / light tanks / medium tanks /. 2. The total number

of Wehrmacht tanks is greater than the number of tankettes, light and medium, because. each division had 10-15 so-called "commander tanks".

3. The PZ-I and PZ-II are classified as "tanks", the Czech PZ-38 (t) and PZ-III of the first series with a 37-mm gun are classified as "light tanks", PZ- III with 50mm gun and PZ-IV. See chapter 3.3 for more details. 4. The number of tanks in the mechanized corps of the Red

Army is indicated as follows: total tanks in the mechanized corps / including T-34 and KB /.

5. Only those formations that were put into battle in the first 15-20 days of the war are listed in the composition of the tank forces of the Red Army. 6. The number

of the 1st MK is indicated without taking into account the 1st TD, which was before end of July 1941 in the Arctic.

7. The table does not take into account the 17th MK and the 20th MK of the Western Front, which were in the process of formation and acted as rifle formations.

8. In

accordance with the actual course of hostilities, the 109th honey (5th MK) is included in the troops of the Southwestern Front, respectively, the number of tanks in the 5th MK is indicated without taking into account the number of the 109th medical.

Appendix 3

Expected and actual enemy grouping

Marshal G.K. Zhukov (who since February 1941 held the post of Chief of the General Staff of the Red Army) as one of the main reasons for the defeat of the Soviet troops calls the fact that "a sudden transition to the offensive on such a scale, moreover, immediately with all available and previously deployed forces in the most important strategic directions ... we did not expect. Neither the people's commissar of defense, nor I, nor my predecessors Shaposhnikov and Meretskov expected that the enemy would concentrate such a mass of armored and motorized troops and abandon them on the very first day in powerful compact groups in all strategic directions in order to deliver crushing cutting blows.

For a long time, we could only guess about what kind of enemy forces, on what "scale", with the participation of what "mass of armored and motorized troops" the top military-political leadership of the Soviet Union expected to meet in the first battles. After the publication in the early 1990s of certain Soviet military planning documents, these questions can already be answered quite concretely.

The estimated number of troops that Germany will be able to field for the war with the Soviet Union, indicated in the following documents:

	пд	тд	мд	танки	самолеты
1. «Соображения об основах стратегического развертывания Вооруженных Сил СССР», 18 сентября 1940 года	145	17	8	10 000	13 000
2. «Уточненный план стратегического развертывания Вооруженных Сил СССР», 11 марта 1941 года	165	20	15	10 000	10 000
3. «Соображения по плану стратегического развертывания сил Советского Союза на случай войны с Германией и ее союзниками», 15 мая 1941 года	141	19	15	—	—
Фактический состав групп армий «Север», «Центр», «Юг» 22 июня 1941 года	91	17	9	3628	2500

The Soviet intelligence and the High Command had the most fantastic idea about the combat composition of the Luftwaffe:

	истребители	бомбардировщики	пикировщики
По данным «Спецсообщения Разведуправления Генштаба РККА» от 11 марта 1941 года	3820	4090	1850
Фактическое число боеготовых самолетов на всех фронтах по состоянию на 24 июня 1941 года	1151	1059	260

Notes:

1. The total number of "91 infantry divisions" includes 4 light infantry, 1 cavalry, 4 mountain infantry and 5 SS combat divisions.

2. The total number of "3628 tanks" includes 3266 tanks, which were in service with tank divisions, 246 assault

(self-propelled) guns and 112 flamethrower tanks.

3. Multi-purpose Me-110s are classified as fighters or bombers in accordance with the purpose of the air groups in which they were part. 4.

Only single-engine Ju-87s are

classified as "dive bombers",

twin-engine Ju-88s are accounted for in the "bombers" category.

List of used literature

1. Meltyukhov M.I. Stalin's missed chance. Moscow: Veche, 2000.
2. Khorkov A.G. Stormy June. Tragedy and feat of the frontier troops. M., Military Publishing House, 1991.
3. "1941 - Lessons and Conclusions." M.: Military Publishing House, 1992.
4. Koyander V.D. I am Ruby. I order. Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1978.
5. Russian archive. The Great Patriotic War. VGK rate. Documentation and materials, 1941. T. 16. M.: Publishing house TERRA, 1996.
6. Russia - XX century. Documentation. 1941 Book 2. M.: International Fund "Democracy", 1998.
7. Collection "Tankers in the battle for Leningrad." L.: Lenizdat, 1987.
8. Internet site "Mechanized Corps of the Red Army", www.mechcorps.rkka.ru
9. Golushko I.M. Tanks came to life again. M.: Military Publishing, 1977.
10. Jentz Thomas I. Panzer Truppen. Shiner Military History. Atglen, PA.
11. Müller-Gillebrand B. Land Army of Germany 1933-1945. M.: Izographus, 2002.
12. Halder F. Military diary. T.3. M.: Military Publishing House, 1971.
13. Goth G. Tank Operations. Smolensk: Rusich, 1999.
14. Russian archive. The Great Patriotic War. On the eve of the war. Materials of the meeting of the top leadership of the Red Army on December 23-31, 1940. M.: TERRA, 1993.
15. Zhukov G.K. Memories and reflections. M.: APN, 1969.
16. Russia - XX century. Documentation. 1941 Book 1. M.: International Fund "Democracy", 1998.
17. Journal of combat operations of the 21st Panzer Division. Internet site of the Mechanized Corps of the Red Army.
18. Meretskoy K.A. In the service of the people. M.: Politizdat, 1988.
19. Shvabedissen V. Stalin's falcons. Analysis of the actions of Soviet aviation in 1941-1945. Minsk: Harvest, 2001.
20. Sverdlov F.D. Soviet generals in captivity. Moscow: Holocaust Foundation, 1999.

21. Kunitsky P.T. Restoration of the broken strategic defense front in 1941. "Military Historical Journal". 1988, no. 7.

22. Lelyushenko D.D. Moscow - Stalingrad - Berlin - Prague. M.: Nauka, 1985. 23.

Collection of documents "Soviet aviation in the Second World War in numbers." 1962. Internet site "RKKA".

24. Price Alfred. Luftwaffe Data Book. 1997.

25. Korniyukhin G.F. Soviet fighters in the Great Patriotic War. In the book: "Aces of the Allies". Smolensk: Rusich, 2000. 26. Jokipii Mauno.

Finland is on the road to war. Per. from Finnish Petrozavodsk: Karelia, 1999. 27. Kozhevnikov M.N.

Command and headquarters of the Air Force of the Soviet Army in the Great Patriotic War of 1941-1945. Moscow: Nauka, 1985.

28. Website The Finnish Army in the Second World War <http://www.lysator.liu.se/nordic/mirror/sa>

29. Vaynu X. Many-sided Mannerheim. New and Modern History, 1997, No. 5. 30.

V. Savelyev, On the northern approaches to Leningrad. Internet RKKA website.

31. Seppälä X. Finland as an occupier. Magazine "North", 1995. 32. Pietola E. Prisoners of war in Finland 1941-1944. Per. With Finnish Magazine "North". 1990, No.

12. 33. Journal "Questions of History". 1989, no. 7, p. 66. 34. Kemppainen. Mannerheim - Marshal and President. Zvezda Magazine. 1999, No.

10. 35. "Secrecy removed." Statistical study./Ed. G.F. Krivosheev. M.: Military Publishing, 1993.

36. Balke U. "KG 2 Unit History".

37 Balke U. Der Luftkrieg im Europa. Kublenz, 1989.

38. Groehler O. Geschichte des Luftkrieges 1910 bis 1980. Berlin, 1985. 39.

Novikov AA In the sky of Leningrad. M.: Nauka, 1970. 40.

Anfilov V.A. The road to the tragedy of the forty-first year. M.: Publisher Akopov, 1997. 41.

Fedorov A.G. Aviation in the Battle of Moscow. Moscow: Nauka, 1971.

42. Izvestia of the Central Committee of the CPSU, 1990, No. 1. 43. Fighting in Finland. Digest of articles. M.: Ed. People's Commissariat of Defense, 1941. 44. "Bug on fire". Digest of articles. Minsk: Belarus, 1977. 45. Ivanov SP. Army headquarters, front-line headquarters. M., Military Publishing House, 1990. 46. Liddell Hart B.G. The Second World War. M., ACT, 1999. 47. Results of the Second World War. Digest of articles. Per. with him. M., Foreign Literature, 1957. 48. Emelianenko V.B. In the military air harsh. M., Young Guard, 1972. 49. Polynin F.P. Battle routes. M., Military Publishing, 1972. 50. Skripko N.S. For targets near and far. M., Military Publishing House, 1981. 51. Inozemtsev I.G. Under the wing - Leningrad. M., military publishing house. 52. Alekseenko V.I. Soviet Air Force on the Eve and During the Great Patriotic War. Journal "Aviation and Cosmonautics - Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow", 2000, No. 2, 3.
53. Timokhovitch I.V. In the sky of war M., Military Publishing House, 1986. 54. Rytov A.G. Knights of the Fifth Ocean. M., Military Publishing, 1968. 55. Zakharov G.N. I am a fighter. M., Military Publishing House, 1985. 56. Khazanov D.B. Invasion. The beginning of the air war on the Soviet-German front. Journal "Aviation and Time", 1996, No. 3, 4, 5.
57. Stepanov A.S. Pyrrhic victory for the Luftwaffe in the West. Aviation History Magazine, 2000, No. 3. 58. Gulyas Y.A. "Victory of Soviet pilots on the first day of the war", Aerohobby magazine, 1994, No. 1. 59. Archipenko F.F. Notes of a fighter pilot. Kharkiv: Delta, 1999. 60. Litvin GA. Broken wings of the Luftwaffe. Magazine "Aviation and Cosmonautics - Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow", 1998, No. 7, 8. 61. "The first days of the war in documents." "Military History Journal", 1989, No. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9. 62. Popov A. 15 meetings with KGB General Belchenko. M., Olma press", 2002.

63. Khazanov D.B. Werner Melders. Aviamaster magazine, 1997, No. 4,

5. 64. Tsupko P.I. Dive-bombers. M., Politizdat, 1987. 65.

Guderian G. Memoirs of a soldier. Rostov-on-Don, Phoenix, 1998. 66. Timin

M.V. On the edge of the main blow. Causes of the defeat of the Air Force ZapVO. Ulyanovsk,

2001. 67. Materials of the investigation and trial of General D.G. Pavlov. Collection of documents "Unknown Russia, XX century". Book 2. M., Historical heritage, 1992.

68. "The hidden truth of the war." Collection of documents, ed. P.N. Knyashevsky. M., "Russian book", 1992.

69. "Documents of foreign policy". T.23. Book 2. M., Historical Documentary Department of the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs of Russia, 1995. 70. "USSR - Germany, 1939-1941". Documents and materials, (translation of the collection "Nazi-Soviet Relations". Department of State, 1948). Vilnius: Mokslas, 1989.

71. Dyakov D.L., Bushueva T.S. The Nazi sword was forged in the USSR. M., Soviet Russia,

1992. 72. Churchill Winston S. World War II. T.Z, M., TERRA, 1998. 73.

"The Great Patriotic War of the Soviet Union, 1941—1945". Short story. M., Politizdat, 1970.

74. Ibatullin T.G. War and captivity. SPb.,

1999. 75. Moskalenko K.S. In the southwest direction. Book 1. M., "Science",

1975. 76. Speke Mike. Aces of the Luftwaffe. Smolensk:

Rusich, 1999. 77. Speke Mike. Aces of the Luftwaffe.

Smolensk: Rusich, 2000. 78. Semidetko V.A. The origins of the defeat in Belarus. "Historical journal", 1989, No. 4.

79. Sandalov L.M. Fighting troops of the 4th Army. M., Voen Published, 1961. Cited. according to: VIZH 1988, No. 10,11,12; 1989, No. 2, 6, 7.

80. Boldin I.V. pages of life. Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1961. 81.

Bobrentsev V.A., Ryazantsev V.B. Executioners and victims. M., Military Publishing House, 1993.

82. Sandalov L.M. Experienced. Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1966.

83. Website "Workers 'and Peasants' Red Army", [www. rkka. en](http://www.rkka.en) 84.

Shirokorad A. Aviation guns. Magazine "Technique and Weapons" (special issue), 1996, No. 11-12. 85. Magazine

"Technology and Armament", 2001, No. 7. 86.

Magazine "Aviation and Cosmonautics", 2001, No.

5-6. 87. Website "The Russian Battlefield", [www. battlefield.com](http://www.battlefield.com)

88. Medved A., Khazanov D. Long-range bomber Yer-2.

Aviamaster magazine, 1999, No. 2

89. Shumikhin VS Soviet military aviation 1917-1941. Moscow: Military Publishing

House, 1986. 90. Russian Air Force [website](http://www.airforce),

www.airforce. en 91. Maslov M.A. Fighter I-16. M.: Exprint NV,

1997. 92. Vladimirsky A.V. On the Kiev direction. According to the experience of conducting combat operations by the troops of the 5th Army of the South-Western Front in June-September

1941. Moscow: Military Publishing House, 1989. 93. Artillery armament of Soviet tanks 1940-1945.

Magazine "Armada", 1999, No. 4. 94. Baryatinsky M. Medium tank Panzer-IV. Journal

"Armored Collection Lecture", 1999, No. 6. 95. Shmelev I. Tank T-34. Magazine

"Technique and weapons", 1998, No. 11, 12. 96. Baryatinsky M. Medium tank

T-34. Magazine "Armored Collection", 1999, No. 3. 97. Zheltov I., Pavlov I., Pavlov M. Tanks BT. In 3 parts.

Magazine "Armada", 1989, No. 9; 1999 No. 15. 98. Historical and technical [journal](http://www.polygon.ru)

"Polygon", ISSN 1680-0680, [www. weapons.df.ru](http://www.weapons.df.ru) 99. Encyclopedia of tanks. - Compiled

by G.L. Kholyavsky Minsk: "Harvest", 1999. 100. Baryatinsky

M. Tanks of the Wehrmacht. M.: Askold, 1993. 101. Baryatinsky M.,

Pavlov M. Medium tank T-28. M.: Askold, 1993. 102. Astrov N.L. The beginning of the

war: from T-40 to T-70. Journal "Behind the wheel", 1989, No. 10. 103.

Gurov A.A. The fighting of the Soviet troops in the south-western direction in the initial po

Journal", 1988, No. 8.

104. Zolotov N.P., Isaev S.I. They were combat ready ... "Military Historical Journal, 1993, No. 11. 105. Popel N.K. At a difficult time. M.: ACT, 2001. 106. Biryuzov S.S. When the guns were roaring. M.: Military Publishing, 1962. 107. Suvorov V. Day-M. M.: JSC "All for you", 1994. 108. Bobylev P.N. Rehearsal for disaster. "Military History Journal", 1993, No. 6, 7, 8. 109. Arkhipov V.S. The Time of Tank Attacks. M.: Military Publishing House, 1981. Software.

Bagramyan I.Kh. Thus the war began. Moscow: Military Publishing, 1971.

111. Rokossovsky K.K. Soldier duty. M.: Military Publishing House, 1997. 112. Izvestia of the Central Committee of the CPSU, 1990, No. 7. 113. Ryabyshev D.I. On the participation of the 8th mechanized corps in the counterattack of the Southwestern Front. Website «The Russian Battlefield*.

114. Izvestia of the Central Committee of the CPSU, 1990, No. 6. 115. Jacobsen G.A. 1939-1945. The Second World War. Chronicle and documents. On Sat. World War II: two views. M.: Thought, 1995. 116. Taylor A. World War II. On Sat. World War II: Two Views. M., Thought, 1995.

117. Sokolov B.V. Secrets of World War II. Moscow: Veche, 2001. 118. Yakovlev A.N. By relics and oil. Moscow: Eurasia, 1995. 119. Drobyazko S.I. Eastern legions and Cossack units in the Wehrmacht. M.: ACT, 1999. 120. Antilevsky M.

Aviation of General Vlasov. Aviation History Magazine, 2000, No. 2. 121. Rutych N. Between two dictatorships.

Rodina magazine, 1991, No. 6, 7. 122. Marx K., Engels F. Works. T.P. M.: Politizdat, 1958.

123. Journal "Izvestia of the Central Committee of the CPSU", 1990, No. 9. 124. Reshin L.E., Stepanov V.S. Generals' fates. "Military Historical Journal", 1993, No. 10, 11, 12. 125. Radzinsky E.S. Stalin. M.: Vagrius, 1997. 126. "They gave their lives for the Motherland."

Brief biographical data of the generals of the Soviet Army who died, died and went missing during the Great Patriotic War. Military History Journal, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1999.

127. Tippleskirch K. History of the Second World War 1939-1945. M.: ACT, 2001. 128. Danilov V.,

Shanin T. Peasant uprising in the Tambov province in 1919-1921. Tambov, 1994. 129. The Black Book of Communism.

Digest of articles. M.: Three centuries of history, 2001. 130. Vasilyeva L. Kremlin wives.

Kharkov: Eureka-defant, 1992. 131. Kulchitsky S. How many of us died from

the Holodomor. Internet magazine "Zerkalo Nedeli", [www. mirror.kiev.ua](http://www.mirror.kiev.ua)
132. Foreign trade of the USSR for 1918-1940.

Statistical
review. M.: Vneshtorgizdat, 1960.

133. Krasnaya Nov magazine, 1921, No. 1.

134. Zenkovich N.A. The most closed people. Encyclopedia of biographies.
Moscow: OLMA-PRESS Star World, 2002. 135. Heroes of
the Soviet Union. Brief biographical dictionary. M.: Military Publishing
House, 1987. 136.

Vert N. History of the Soviet State. M., 1995. 137. Sudoplatov
P.A. Special operations. Lubyanka and the Kremlin. M.: OLMA-PRESS,
1997. 138. Soviet

feature films. Annotated directory. Moscow: Art, 1961. 139. Tokarev V.A.
Soviet society and the Polish
campaign of 1939

of the year. Magnitogorsk: Magnitogorsk State University, 2000.

140. Winter war 1939-1940. In 2 volumes / Under the editorship of O.A.
Rzhesheshevsky, E.N. Kulkov. T.2, M.: Nauka, 1998.

141. Magazine "World of Aviation", 1992, No. 1, p.

26. 142. Online magazine "Duel" dated July 13, 1999, No. 28(119),
www.duel.ru

143. Front-line soldiers answered like this. Five Questions of the General
Staff / Ed. V.P. Krikunova, "Military History Journal", 1989, No. 5. 144. MacDonald
C. A

difficult test. American military forces in the European theater during World
War II. Per. from English. M.: Military Publishing House, 1979. 145. Uralnis B.Ts.
Wars and the population of Europe. M. 1960.

146. Suvorov V. Cleansing. M.: ACT, 1998.

147. Eve and the beginning of the war. Documents and materials. Compiled by L.A. Kirchner. Lenizdat, 1991.
148. Armor Collection Magazine, 2002, No. 3.
149. Souvenirs O.F. The tragedy of the Red Army. 1937-1938. Moscow, 1998.
150. Komal F.B. Military personnel on the eve of the war. "Military Historical Journal, 1990, No. 2. 151.
- Boyarsky V.I. Partisans and the army. Minsk: Harvest, 2001. 152.
- Mannerheim K.G. Memoirs. M.: Vagrius, 2003. 153.
- Aleksandrov K.M. Army officer corps, Lieutenant General Vlasov. Russian-Baltic information center "Blits". SPb., 2001.
154. Drobyazko S. Eastern volunteers in the Wehrmacht, police and SS. M.: ACT, 2000.
155. Chuev S. Damned soldiers. Moscow: Yauza-EKSMO, 2004.
156. Tkachenko S.N. Rebel army. Fight tactics. Minsk: Harvest; M., ACT, 2000.
157. Partisans and punishers. Compiled by Yegere E.V. Riga: Tornado, 1998.
158. Sokolov B.V. An occupation. Truth and myths. M.: AST-PRESS KNIGA, 2002.
159. Altman I.A. Holocaust and Jewish resistance occupied territory of the USSR. Moscow: Holocaust Foundation, 2002.
160. Repressions against Poles and Polish citizens. Compiler A.E. Guryanov. M.: Links, 1997.
161. Semiryaga M.I. Secrets of Stalinist diplomacy. M.: Higher school, 1992.
162. , Sudoplatov P.A. Special operations. Lubyanka and the Kremlin, 1930—1950s. M.: OLMA-Press, 1997.
163. Sverdlov F.D. Mistakes G.K. Zhukov (year 1942). M.: Monolit, 2002.
164. Smilovitsky L. Catastrophe of the Jews in Belarus. Tel Aviv, 2000.
165. Gungak T. Ukrasha, the first half of the XX century. Kyiv: Lib, 1993.
166. Isaev A.V. From Dubno to Rostov. M.: ACT, 2004.
167. Soviet-Finnish war 1939-1940. In 2 vols./Comp. P.V. Petrov, V.N. Stepanov. St. Petersburg: Polygon, 2003.